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THE TUDOR

TRANSLATIONS

EDITED BY

W. E. HENLEY

XX

CERTAIN TRAGICAL DISCOURSES OF BANDELLO

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY

GEFFRAIE FENTON

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With an Introduction by

ROBERT LANGTON DOUGLAS

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THE DISORDERED LYF of the COUNTESSE OF CELANT; who, livynge longe in adultery, and after she had procured diverse morders, receaved the hier of her wickednes by a shameful death.

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DISCOURSE VII

THE ARGUMENT

Yf the wisemen of olde time founde cause of cohibicion in their unruly children and ympes of wanton youthe, I thinke we have double reason, in this age, to use a steddie eye, bothe upon our daughters and such as are geven us in socyetie of wedlock. Not for that, I wishe the one to be kepte under as servants or servile slaves; nor to take awaye from the other, the whole skoope of libertie appointed by the preferment of mariage; but, exposinge an indifferent and honeste meane, I wishe to eschewe the murmore of the world, by cuttinge of suche infynit occasions of infections as seame to offer them selves to corrupte and seduce the fragilitie of our youth; chieflye seinge a dayly experience of so many assaltes and alarams of fylthye love, offered to our daughters and litle girles, beinge yet in the firste flame of the fyre whiche nature kindleth in the hartes of suche as accompte them selves most confirmed in the yere of maturitie or discrecion. Neyther wolde I that either the maide or the maried woman shold refuse to have a bridel put to her libertie, considering it is such a garde of her quiet and honest name, wyth chiefe defence against the malice of the reprochefull worlde, that it were better to be chayned in the bottom of a darke pryson, then to enjoye the benefit of the open ayer, being noted of such spottes of infamy as commonly attendes upon an inordynat libertie and licencious life. Wherein, if the desolacion of so many parentes, wepinge in the villanie of their wives and daughters, utter ruine and subvercion of so many houses, presented in stage playes to feede the vaine eyes of the reprochefull multitude, argued not the nomber of inconvenience happening by a dissolute and libertines lif, and that in the persones of diverse our great men's daughters now a daies, we nede not seame so curious in keping this continuall

watche and garde, but resigne such ceremonies to be practised in strang contries, wher men are jelous of their owne shadow, with opinion that their wives or daughters are not able to resiste the least and most simple attaynt that can be offred. But wher th' examples are more then manifest, and the frutes of the folly burst out in open shew, let us leave to allow or assise the brutal opinion of such as perswade that awe is not necessary for youth; or that severe correction, or rather folysh pampering, bredes a dolnes of wit, with impediment of the disposition of the mind, or hinderance to th' increase of natural giftes. The daughters of Rome lyved alwaies within the house of their fathers, with no more libertie then was measured unto theim by the eyes of their mother, and yet wer they vertuous matrons in their houses, and so sufficiently instructed in cyvilitie, that I doubt the most perfect courtier we have at this day deserveth not comparison with the least of their perfections. For what other civilitie or example of honest life can the maides of our time learn in any company now a dayes, if not to seame eloquent in pratlinge discourses of vaine and filthie love, with wordes ful of vaine and filthy love, and intising behaviors of an open curtisan, and somtime to make an experience of an act no lesse detestable, indede, then the remembrance ought to be hateful to al honest men. Albeit, as I wold not by this meanes procure a general inhibicion of honest conference and company amongest the nobilitie of our contry, with exercises tollerated by the perscription of libertie lefte unto us by our auncients; so it is an indevor most necessary, in mine opinion, to make a contemplacion, or view, of the maners or inclinacion of wils, with a discression to check such as be to froward, and make slack in some sort the raine of awful govermente to them that seame of more tender disposicion. By the assistance of which polycie, it cold not be chosen but vertue shold glyster as greatly in the houses of great men, as rude behavior in the cabynet of the paisant or uncivile frankeling; who commonly goeth more neare the discipline of th' elders in norriture of their children then such as undertake to be maisters of art or patornes of exquisit skil, touching the education of yonglings. For which cause the wise Emperour, Marcus Aurelius, wold not have his doughters brought up in the court. 'For how can the norce' (saith he) 'be honest her selfe, or ympart vertu to her child, seing nothing but practises of evil, an universatie of the disputacion of love, with a thousand vaine delites to withdraw her from

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wel doinge, or to showe effectes of a godly lyfe.' But to avoide the imputacion or title of a rigorous judge, whiche some of oure ladies or gentlewomen maye peradventure bestowe upon me in prescribing suche straite rules of their reformacion, I prefer, for my only defence, the benefit of vertue; who, I am sewer, wil alwaies appeare perfecte as she is, both in bud and branch, in what soile soever she be planted. Wherin, as wel for mine owne excuse, as also to make more noble the sinceritie of noble dames by th' impudent life of the slipperie sort of women, I have preferred this example of an Italian countesse, who, so long as her first husband (not ignorant of the humor of her inclination) kepte her within the viewe of his eye, seamed so curious of her reputacion that the same only was hable to pleade againste al th' ennemies of her renowme: but the vaile of this fre captivitie was no soner taken away by the death of her husband, but God knoweth what valyant exploites she performed. And your selves may be judges what false bowndes she gave to her owne honor, with badges of infamie to hym that shold have governed her, in her second mariage, if you wil use patience in readinge the discourse that followeth.

IN th' uttermoste partes of Pyemount, is a percell of th' inheritaunce of the Marques Mountserrat called Casalia, where dwelte, sometyme, one Iames Scarpadon, a manne more notorius in those partes by his treasure and abhomynable trade of usurie and fylthie gaine, then of anye reputacion elswhere by discent of parentage or monument of any vertue or godly disposicion; who, marienge a Grecian damesell of equal qualitie and calibre, begat of her a doughter, more faire then vertuouse, lesse honest then was necessarie, and worse disposed then well given any waye. Ymediatlye after whose birthe, the father (as one overcharged with yeres, and tormented with care to encrease the glee of his golden coffers) renownced nature and dyed, bequeathing a porcion of a hundreth thowsande dockattes to his younge doughter, Blanche Maria; who, dismissing the age of infancie

accordyng to th' ordynarye course of tymes, seamed sooner rype in yeres then confirmed in discrecion, or hable to admitt the order of good government. For goinge on the xvi yere of her age, albeit her doinges were not voied of diverse argumentes of bad disposicion, yet the respect of her beauty, with th' intisinge desier of her large porcion, forced severall importunities in sondry noble men and princes of the contrey; in such sorte as, by extreame sute and mediacion of frendes, she was marryed at last to the Viscount Hermes, sonne and heir of the chyefest house in Myllan, who, incontinent after the mariage, caried her in greate pompp to his house, leavinge her mother to traffyque th' affaires of her usurye, accordyng to the former trade of her late husbande. This viscount, after he had practised a while th' inclinacion of his wyfe—in whom he noted more argumentes of wanton and unseamelye glees, with a desyer of dysordinat liberty, then apparance of any vertue, honest qualitie, or womanly behaviour—began, by litle and litle, to prevent th' effect of so many lyklyhodes of perentorye ylls, by puttinge a brydel to her wilfull appetite. Wherein, notwithstandyng, he seamed so precise (bothe to avoyde the name of discourteouse on his wyves behalf, and also to shonne th' imputacion of a jelouse or suspicius husbande) that, wythout manye wordes of reproche, eyther in publike or secrette, reprehendinge her faulte rather by cyrcumstaunce then plain discourse, he broughte her at laste to dismisse all desyer to goe abroade, wyth contentement (perforce) to make her only solace of the societie and companye whyche she fonde in his house. Wherin also, for his parte, he forgat not to court and embrace her with a more continual haunte of his company then eyther was necessarie for his health or he well hable to performe; neyther yet convenient to have ben don, yf, by such pollicie, he had not governed her lightnes and kept her in reasonable breath. And albeit the dames of Myllan have a more skoape of libertie then the reste of the ladies in any part in Italie, havyng by custume (as yt were) certaine dayes in the weeke of entercourse and meetinge together, yet th' indevour of this viscount, broughte his wyfe not onely in contempt with suche assemblies, but also to disclaime all gossoppes trade, or other

Blanche Maria maried to the Viscount Hermes.

The order of a wise husband in reprehendinge the follies of his wife.

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felowshippe, saving such as she founde in the house of her husbande; from whose presence shee departed not for any intreatye whatsoever. Wherewith, her companions and ladies of the citie, fyndyng a lacke of her companie, fearing withal that the continuance of suche precident wolde in tyme prevaile above their present libertie, in procuringe to theim all a semblable restrainte from their accustumed accesse, suborned an olde matrone called Madona Hipolyta Sforce; who, broakinge one daye with Seigneur Hermes of other affaires, asked hym why he kepte his wife so shorte, with advise in the ende that he would slacke somwhat the bridle of his rigour, and enjoyne her a longer line or compasse of libertie, leaste the worlde entred into moormure agaynste hym; with ymaginacion that he eyther doated of her beautie or had her honestie in doute. 'For' (sayth she) 'by kepinge her in this straite mewe, you bring her fragilitie in question, and wynneth to your self the title of a jelouse husband.' He aunswered her breef demaunde with tearmes of as shorte discourse, observing, notwithstanding, the condicion of his owne estate, and qualitie of her that propouned the question.

The wise aunswere of the viscount thouchynge the governement of hys wife.

'There is no man, good madam' (sayth he) 'that speaketh not some time that whiche he oughte not to thinke. Evenso what eare is priviledged from hearinge suche thinges as are not true? For suche as are vainelie occupied in disputinge at large uppon my doinges, are ignorant of the cause; and muche lesse knowe they the disposicion of my wyf; whom I had rather kepe captif in seamelie order, then, in gyvynge leave to her libertie, to procure her dishonour, and my selfe juste infamye. He that will kepe the thynge peculyar to hym selfe whyche is desyred of many, muste neyther offer yt to the sale, nor suffer yt to be seene but seldom; and as yt is only I that am pryvye to myne owne greef, so I am not ignoraunt of a medecyne to restore the disease; neyther am I voyed of discretion to governe in good sorte, the humours of my younge wyfe, nor at what tymes I shoulde lette slyppe the rayne that restraines the further lybertye you seame to require. But where you charge me wyth a dowte of her honestye, blame me not yf I seeke to prevent that whyche I woulde not sholde happen. And to avoyde th'imputacion

of jalousye, I am content that hensfurthe she come to your house, when, and as often, and at such howers, as yt shall like you to desyer her companie; beynge perswaded that the ranke and reputacion you hold will not broke other societie or felowshyppe then suche as aggree everie waye with your gravitie and vertue: whiche onely shalbee her skoape, with suche other recreacion and pleasure as she fyndes in my house, to the common contentement and mutuall tranquilletie of us bothe. For the rest, I wishe all importunities to ceasse, leaste they wrest me to a further rigour: for as I am hetherunto fullye perswaded of her honestie, so I accompte yt a wysdome to forsee that the use of to muche libertie do not corrupte that whyche as yet is without spot.' Wherein treulie he had great reason, and his precedent or example moste worthy of ymitacion to suche as are in like state touchinge the governement of their wyves. For to that kynde of cattall, albeit for diverse respectes wee ought to forbeare to minister th' extremetye of rigour, yet lett us not forgett for all that to kepe theym somewhat shorte, and showe our selves worthye of th' authoritie given us by God and nature, in exposynge the rodd of correction affore they come to excede our awee, or gett the byt betwene their teethe, without power to reclaime theim by any art or pollecie. His prophecie also seamed fully verefyed in the sequeile of the licenceous lyving of his new wif: for that, within fewe yeres after, the viscount beyng served with the processe of hys fatall sommonce, gave place to the worlde, and yelded to the dome of hys destynes; whyche, after Blanche Maria had lamented with a fewe womanly teares, and performed the funeral ceremonies, more to defende her from mormure of the people then for respect of dutie to hym that was dead, she retyred to Mountserrat, where she also encountred the newes of the deathe of her mother, whyche she disgested in lyke sorte with an ordynary dule, and repaired ymediatly to Casalia; where, beynge ladye over all and subject to the controlement of none, she tooke such a sewer taste and sypped so strongelie on the cup of licenceous lybertie, that yt bredd in her an insatiable thurste of wanton and dissolute lyfe, as you shall heare hereafter. For

The visecount dieth.

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her chief and common exercise there was to force a frizilacion of her haire with the bodkind, converting the naturall coollour into a glistering glee, suborned by arte to abuse God and nature; by alteringe the complexion of her face by a dye of fadinge coollours devised by pollecye, and that with more curosytie then the moste shameles curtisan in Rome; glauncing uppon every one oute of the windowe; kepinge privat banquettes in the nighte with a haunte of masquers with covered face; and on the daye, sittinge at her gate, as a stale, to allure a staye of suche as passed by the stretes. There was no offer made whyche she dyd not admit, no request preferred whyche she dyd not willyngelye heare, nor letter sent whyche shee dyd not receive and aunswere. This was the fyrste earneste penny, and foundacion, of her licencious lyfe; wherein she gained at laste the price and chiefe praise from all women that ever made profession to weare the armes of Cupido or marched under th' enseygne of hys mother Venus.

I wishe the mothers and governours of lytle girles in our contrey wolde respect chieflye ij moste necessarie rules in th' educacion of theyr tender ympes: the one to barre all secret conference in corners, whyche is the greatest corrupter of youth; the other, open and publike cacquet in the streetes, whyche bringes their honour in question amongest the multitude. For as the towne and fortresse besieged seamethe halfe won, and not hable to endure the force of the canon, yf she demande a parley or composicion; so the eare of a woman that is open to the tale of everie frivolus lover, or enclyned to give the leaste creditt to hys discourse, albeyt her honour and chastetie bee not in interest but cleare from imputacion of juste cryme, yet dothe shee leave a sufficient occasion to the people to dispute and skan her doynges with other tearmes then she deserveth. For as well muste wee avoide the suspicion as th' effecte of evyll, seinge the good renowme is no lesse necessarie then th' onest life. And she that wil be noted of integretie and sincere perfection of livinge, must not only avoide the acte of adulterie, but also the suspicion of the same: wherfore, I wishe all ladyes to stande so sewerly upon their guarde, that they neyther be

Womenne muste avoide aswel the suspicion as th'act of evyll.

affected to th' one, nor infected wyth th' other; but rather, in devidinge their doinges into an honeste meane, to do nothinge in secret whych shame denieth theym to justefye in publike, nor to be the secretarie of any man's vanitie, or cause of the common hawnt or wonder of the people, but rather to observe the pollecie of the serpent, who useth to stoppe her eares with her taile, to th' end she be not infected wyth the noyse of the charmer.

A pollecye of the serpent.

But nowe to our Blanche Maria, who resolved whollie in the studie and exercises of love, somtyme sitting in the window with a lute in her hande, sometime passing the streetes with open face, more to allure the people to a gaze then for her necessary affaires, or take the open ayre for preserving of health, and now and then (for chaunge of recreacion) to make solemne banquettes, wher the presence of her parentes and frendes and states of gravitie was not tollerable, but only the companie of the carpet secte, and such as cold make best court to ladies: where, amongest the rest of her ordenarye hawnt, shee was chiefelye pursewed by the lorde Gysmond Gonsaga, son and heir to the duke of Mantua, and th' erle of Celand, one of the greatest reputacion for honor in the dukedom of Scavoye; bothe whiche, as they did their best to obteine her in mariage, omitting no meanes to advance their service and make theim meritorious of her favour, so she made her onlye pastyme, and toke singler pleasure, in the sondry ymportunities of these two woers, slenting at their sortes of devises in woing, smiling at their follie, carping their gesture and behaviour, and counterfetting so artyfyciallie their amarus regardes, hollow sighes, and often tornes of the eye, wyth change of complexion and ympedyment of the tong, whilest they were uppon tearmes to obteine her good will, that she seamed to have red no other authors, or made profession of other experience in the whole discourse of her lyfe afore. Signeiur Gonsaga procured th' assistance of his mother-in-lawe, the Marques of Mounteferrat whose perswacions, wyth earnest sute, in shorte tyme had so sommoned the wydow to affection on hys behalf, that the mariage was not onely concluded, but at pointe of fynall consommacion by order of the church, if the Scavonian

Alteracyons in a lover in the presence of hys ladye.

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erle had not (as it were) forbidded the banes, and intercepted their resolucion by fyne force. For, understanding that another had entred the lystes, and made breache wher he had geven so many assaltes, and at the verye pointe to praye upon his mistres, he, usinge the nexte offer of conveniente tyme, went to the lodging of his ladye, whom he founde all alone, and (as he thought) somewhat disposed to heare his discourse; whiche he broached unto her in these tearmes, with a kinde of countenance and gesture arguinge sufficiently the simplicitie of his love.

The erle woethe the widowe.

'If I were as sewer of meanes to relcave my distresse, as I am certeine to suffer the smart, I colde easelye dismisse my present perplexetie of mynde, occupied with treble dowte, the one whether I sholde blame myselfe of negligence, accuse you of rigour, good madame, or cry out of my fortune, which hetherunto hath favored me with a vaine hope of good successe, and now left me to the mercie of absolute dispaire. For the small remorce and slender compassion which hetherto have appered in you do argue a great wrong on your part touching the justice of my cause, seing you have not only denied pitie towards my sondry passions, but also made none accompt any way of the loyall and honest love I beare you; for that you wold never allow nor seame to understand any regard or other meanes I preferred for th' advauncemente of the same. And yet I find a greater falt in my self in suffring an other to cut the earthe frome under my feete, and marche so farre in my steppes, that I have almoste loste thee tracke of the praye I chieflye desyer: but above all I complaine upon our common fortune that hath brought me in daunger of present dispaire, loasinge the thing I justely deserve, and you in semblable perill, by committinge you to a place where your captivitie shal be no lesse then the slaves or servile sorte of Moares condemned to the mynes in Portugale or Indya. Have you now forgot the sondrye miseries you endured under the governement of youre late husband, Seigneur Hermes? Doth it not suffice, that he kept you in the mew, and (as it were) in his chamber, the space of v or vi yeres, but that in retournynge to a more desolacion, wyth exchaunge of that captivitie for

a more straite and extreme abridgement of libertie, you committ the remeindor of your florishyng youth to the mercy of the Mantuans, whose heades are the common fordge whereupon the humour of frettynge jelousye doth alwaies beate? Weare it not better (good madame) that we, who approache neare the braverie of Fraunce, enjoying a natural participacion of the ayre and libertie of that contreye, shold lyve and be resident together, then, in refusinge th' offer of so greate a commoditie, to make a seconde proffe of the curtesie of an Ytalian; who is not so suspicious, as cruell, and apte to synister conceites without juste cause, and who can not breake th' instinct whiche nature hath given hym, not only to doubte of the honestie of his wife, be she never so vertuouse, but also to kepe her so shorte with strait imprisonment, that she shall neyther be suffred to visit her frendes abroade, nor admitt any accesse at hoame? Besides, what will be the common brute of the world, if not that th' only awe and feare of the Ladye Marquesse hath forced you to mary her son in lawe? Neyther wil they have other opinion of your doinges, but as a pupill, or one standynge in awe of her tutour: wherein you abuse the libertie whiche the lawe hath given you, in suffringe your selfe, not only to be governed, but also forced, by suche as have no reason to rule you, nor authoritie to commaunde you: whiche title, with his sequeile of a thousand inconveniences and annoyes, as I wishe you to eschewe, chiefly for the respect of your owne contentement and quiet of lyf, so, in preventing so present and yminent a perill, dispose your self (good lady) to embrace the gifte of a better time; and ymagyn that fortune hath here sent her messenger, not only to present you with an offer of present pleasure, but also an assured warrante and confirmacion of continuall contentement, even untill th' extreme daye and date of your lyfe. Wherin, for my part, beyng voyde of solicitors, I am come (as you see) in person, to pleade for grace on mine owne behalf; preferrynge unto you a consideracion of the longe and honeste love I have borne you; sommoning your conscience also by justice not to be unthankeful in the guerdon of so due a meritt. You know my estate is voyde of necessitie, or lacke

The Ytalian jelousie by nature.

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of any welthe; neyther are you ignorant (I am sewer) of my large power and possession in Scavoye: both whyche, as I hope, will defende me from charge or note of covetuse desyer, in sekynge the graunte of your favour. So I laye theim also afore you as witnesses, to advouche thus muche further on my behalfe, that th'onlye respecte of your beautie, with other giftes of rare consequence in you, have sturred up my affection, with desyer to do you service, and crave good will in sorte of honest and lawfull mariage. And, albeit, I colde yet have th'assystance of a thousande other reasons to justyfie thus muche of me, yet, reapposinge muche for my self in th'integretie of my cause, I commende unto you the present viewe of an unfained experience, and comit myselfe whollie to th'indifferencie of your judgement. For yf my passion were not vehement, and my torment continual without comparaison, or yf my requeste had neyther reason nor justice on his syde, I had but righte yf I were retorned with a repulse of my dissembled sute, and receive the due hyer of a deceitful mynde; but, seing my demaund standes uppon tearmes of simplicitie, and voyed of treason, importinge an unfained effecte, semblable to the dollorous regardes of my complexion, and seing, withal, I come accompanied with sincerity and undowted entent of honest dealing, and that I cannot take daye with my passion, but by the consent of your good will, regarde (I besech you) the merite of my faith, and measure the meede according to th'equitie of my deserte. Resolve an equal difference (good madam) betwene the deserte of hym that, under the vaile of the power and authoritie of an other, dothe seke to conquere your good will, with intent to keepe you in continuall captivitie, and the juste merite of me, who, respectynge only your beautie and vertue, hath vowed mine honor and lyf to the continuall contemplacion of the same, with this further vowe, to lyve and dye the servant and slave of the least of your commaundements. Let the vehemency of my affection, with the vowe and intent of unfained loyalty, procure you but to a juste remorse and indiffrent consideracion of me. Regarde (I beseche you) th'embassadour, which is love hymselfe, who (in convertinge myne auncient libertye in a present cap-

tivitie and awe of your beautie) hath forced also suche a vehemencie of zeale in me, that, yf my cause retorne with an effecte contrarye to the hope whiche hetherto hath only preserved me, you will come to, too late, a repentance of your crueltie, and by my death shalbe witnessed th'integretie and honest hart which I bare to my onely mistrys and most faire ladie Blanche Maria': who, notyng the roundenes of th'erle, with the dollorus regardes of face, accompanieng his complaint, gave judgement of the simplicity of his love, and renewing besides in her mind the miserie of her laste mariage, with the natural jalousie of al Italians, seamed not only to mislike of her rash graunt to the Marquesse, but also to prefer a special likyng to the present offer of the Scavonian. To whom she replied that, albeit the sondrie benefits of the Ladye Marquesse had bounde her to a thankefull consideracion to her power, and that she was almost as loath to offend her as displcase herself, yet she had not engaged her libertie so far but she reserved one point to stande her self in stead, what neede soever she had. 'For, in the choice of our husbands' (saith she) 'we ought to respect a fre wil and consent of ourselves, and not to observe th' appetite of another, or constrained thereunto by straungers; seyng that as th'institucion of God doth gyve theim unto us for companions without seperacion, so yt is our partes to consider at large afore we resolve of the choice, to th'ende that, in breakyng so holye a ceremonie, we seame not unworthie of so sacred and highe a participacion. But for my part (sir) yf yt were not to avoyde the grudge of suspicion in the wicked sorte with the pertiall and poysoned bable of malicius tounges, I assure you I would live without a seconde assaye of the curtesye of another husbande, protestinge unto you with unfained vowe, that if I thought that he whom my destenies have reserved for my nexte consorte wolde represent, eyther in qualitie or condicion, circunstance or effect, the doinges of hym that is dead, the vale sholde be broken from th'instant, and the bargaine revoked, what earnest or assurance soever is given of it. I thanke you for your advertisement, with treble tribute for the honour you do me in desyeringe a composicion of mariage betwene us,

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The widowe's replye.

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promissing you in simple consideracion of the same, with the small deceite and dissembled traison I note in you, the francke and free preferment of my mariage, yf I happen to dispose myselfe that waye, with addicion of further power over the Ladye Blanche Maria, then any one in the worlde; whereof you maye make as assured accompte as if the proff had alredie confirmed my wordes.'

Th'erle, seynge so faire an entreye, thoughte not convenient to lett slipp the benefyt of so good a time, but fedynge the humor of his fortune, judged yt no point of good husbandry to loase his frute after yt bee rype, nor his corne for wante of gettinge, but beatinge the bushe as the birde was readie to go oute, recharged her with seconde admonishement to bee no lesse carefull of his commoditie then curious of her owne quiett. 'And seyng' (saith he) 'the remembrance of your plages passed gives you reason to feare the fall of future bondage, and that the use of libertie is so deare unto you, why sticke you to abandon the offer of servilitie, and embrase a presente of the quiet you chieflye desyer, or why make you conscience to condescende to that whiche can not redownde but to your honor and contentement? Assure me by the breath of your owne mouth of the faith and loyaltye of maryage, and you shall see me purseue the ende and worke it to effect, without offence or displeasure of anie. If the feare of the Ladie Marquess restrayne your consent, I thinke you do wrong to the chief vertues wherof she is renoumed; for you muste imagyne that she wyll not become suche a tyraness over the wyll of her subjects, as to constraine the ladies of her land to marie agaynste their myndes, and muche lesse force that whych God hath lefte in libertie to all sortes.' Wherwith beholdinge an alteracion of complexion in her face, with a general astonishment thorow all her partes, like one ballancing in doubtfull devises, not hable to resolve a determynate judgement wythout the assistance of some speciall councel, toke her by the hande, and kissinge it with no lesse delite then he founde singler pleasure in thys argument of good successe, renforced her to a more corage, with desyer not to dismay wyth th'assalte, seinge th'assalyante was readye to yelde to

her mercye. 'Neyther doubt to admit hym to your husband' (saieth he) 'who sweareth unto you all such dutie, amytie, and reverence, as belong to a husband, to performe to hys loyall and lawful wyfe; wyth thys further confirmacion of my affection towardes you, that afore the consommacion of the mariage by th' authoritie of the church, I wyl assigne you what pryviledge of libertie your selfe can or wyll devise. Do away then the feare of the marquesse, who, having neyther law nor reason to enter into mislike wyth you, cannot nor will not reprehende you (I am sewer) in making your fancie privye to the choice of your husbande; for a contract forced is a violacion of the sacrament of mariage. And let not the simple and bare promisse to the Lord Gonsaga (whom I knowe you love not) bee any ympedyment to my requeste; for the vowe or promisse ymportes no effecte whiche is procured by constraint.' Wherwyth, the widow, fearing to fal eftsones into servitude, and fully perswaded of the large offer of libertie promissed by the erle, was not hable to aunswere his ymportunities in other sorte then with a franke consent of her faith, wyth a confirmacion by worde and othe, whyche likewyse he advowched for his part by semblable ceremonies, according to th' order of contractes: wherin for a more assurance of the knot, and because the corde sholde not breake, they wrastled a fall, the one aloft of the other, in witnes of the bargayne.

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A contracte forced is a vyolacion of mariage.

This first earnest pennye or pleasante encownter of th' erle procured hym to contynue his hawnte, wyth more open and familyar accesse then affore; in such sort, as fame discovered ymediatly their secret consentes, whiche, also, the common brute brought to the eares of the Ladye Marquesse; who, notwithstanding shee had juste cause of angrye conceite againste the widow, yet the respect of th' erle, and regarde to her owne honor, kept her from any intent of reveng; but, swallowing a pil of pacience, rather by force then order of due digestion, disposed herselfe also to appease the Lord Gonsaga; who, repeating in his mynde the sondrie argumentes of wanton and light behavior heretofore noted in his lost wydowe, began to prophecie of th' issue and ende of his commedie, geving God thankes for his happie delyverie from

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so inconstante a creature. Wherin he greved also on the behalfe of th' infortunat erle, that had planted his affection in so pestilent a soile, exposing even now manifest likelyhodes of the dissolucion of the delite he seamed to take in his new consort and wanton wife; lamenting more his rashenes in th' enterprise, then allowing his wisedom in the choice; for that, accordinge to the Lattyne adage, he that useth more haste in th' execucion, then councell or devise in consulting of his busynes, shall lacke no tyme to repente his rashnes, nor leasure to do pennance for hys folly. And he that in the choice of his wife hath more respect to her flattering bewtie then giftes of true vertue, shall easely bee wearie of pleasure, and hardly enjoye a contynuall quiet of mind: the want wherof hovered even nowe to overwhelme this fonde erle, who, after publication of the mariage, retired wyth his wyfe to his house amongest the mountaines and craggie hills of Scavoye, where he began to take councell of his present affaires. For that, syftynge somwhat nearelye the disposicion of his wyfe, he founde her attyred wholly in the apparell of wanton libertie, and more apte to followe th' inclinacion of vaine and lascivious desyer, then disposed to make a staye of herselfe in the trade of honest vertue. Wherefore, he accompted it an acte of wisedom, to take up the vaine that fedd those humours, and stop her course afore she gained the plaine feelde. Wherein, albeit he used so steadie a hande in the dyot of so daungerous a creature, ministrynge the remedye wyth the consent of suche convenient times and meanes, and in order of such simplicitye and gentle dealyng, that she had no greate cause to note hym of discurtesye, yet she became veray waspishe, in that he was so privye to her disposicion, and forgat so soone the large pryvilege of the lybertye whiche he had promised her; reprehendynge wyth bitter tearmes the generall infidelytie of men, with peculyar exclamacion against th' iniquitye of her fortune, for that she had refused the preferment of the Ladye Marquesse and promise of mariage wyth Seigneur Gonsaga, exchaungyng diverse and sondry offers of honor and libertie for an yrkesome trade of servile lyfe, wyth habitacion amongest the wilde deserts and barraine feeldes of

Savoye; not forgettynge to reproche her husbande with diverse wordes of spite and disdaine, assurynge hym for end, that she wold not remeine long coyffed and kept at commaundement like a childe that is appointed his tymes to studie and howers for recreacion. But th'erle, neither ignorant in the follies of women, nor voyde of experience to practise suche kinde of creatures, preferred a wounderful pacience as his chiefest remedy against the rage of his wyf, laying afore her notwithstanding in gentle tearmes the dutie and indevor of a wyfe towardes her husband, how much and in what sorte she ought to respect the honor of herself and reputacion of mariage, and that as no woman oughte to putt in interest her honor or honest name, so, the greater she is in degree, the more haynous is her offence; and a small faulte of a greate ladie is most mortall in the eye of the multitude, who lookes that the lyfe and vertue of greate ladies shold serve (as it were) as a torche of cleare flame to gyve lighte to the lesser companions. 'Neither is the chastetie of the mynde' (saith he) 'sufficient to confirme the perfect renowme of a gentlewoman, if the wordes and outewarde behavior of the bodye do not followe th'inwarde vertue of the hart, and th'ordynarye hawnte and exercise give manifest declaracion of that whiche lieth hyd in the secretes of the stomacke. And, for my part, I wolde be loathe to give you cause of miscontentement, seing that in the reapose of you consistes the rest of myself, and you beyng oute of quiett, I can not escape without greeff. Seynge that, as the mutuall consent of our wills and affections, with the like conjunction of mariage, hath made you the one halfe and second part of myself, so I expect at your handes only a simple accomplishement of that which your publike othe afore God and man in the churche hath bounde you unto: like as also I am readye to performe unto you th'uttermost of any promisse or priviledge whereof at any tyme I have made protestacion, with full assurance from this presente of everye part of the same, so that you give me the due respect of a husbande. For as the head, beyng the chief and principall part of the reste of the members, hath (as yt were) a speciall authority by nature to governe the whole masse and

A litle falte in a great lady is made a mortal offence in the judgement of the worlde.

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remeynder of the bodye, so the woman, beynge th' inferior part of her husband, is subject to all dutifull obedience on his behalfe, and bounde to honor hym with no worse tearmes then by the name of lord and maister. For in omittinge your duty towards him you abuse the vertue of your vowe, approved by sollemne othe, and in incensing his dishonor, you are guiltie of the violacion and breache of wedlocke. One chief oversighte I note in you is for that uppon smal causes you fordge great complaintes, which argueth the rather the ydlenes of your brayne. For the mynde that ys occupyed wyth vanitye is forgettfull of all thynges savynge suche as th' ynstygacion of pleasure and follye do preferr to her remembraunce; whereon the contrarye part, the sprite affected to vertue exposeth alwayes frutes accordynge to so great a gyfte, dissimuling her passions with wordes of wisdome, and, in knowing much, giveth notwithstandynge a showe of an honest and moderate ignorance. And she that laboreth in a passion of particular conceites, with detestacion of the due respecte of honor, can not studie other workes then such as seame to favor her follye, nor open her eares to any voice, if the same agree not to the complot and contentement of her fancie. Wherein, as I hope, you will eyther pardon me by justice, or at least excuse my simplicitie. For that, as your late tearmes of reproche have forced me to suche a plaines, so, for ende, if you will renounce your trade of former folly, and from hensfurthe retire to an orderly confirmitie of life, you shal not only procure a singler pleasure to me, but cause an absolute contentement with continuall quiet to your selfe: whereof bee careful as you thinke good.'

A woman reformed rather by faire intreatie then force of constraint.

Here the erle had great reason and double pollecie in seking to reforme th' abuses in his wif without th' assistance of crueltie or constraint; for that suche disposicions are rather reduced by faire intreaity, then reclaimed by feare or force of torments, according to the nature of diverse of th' insensible creatures. For the fierce elephant standes not in awe of his keaper by force of any stripes, but is made tractable to bende his lardge bodie whilest he mounte upon his backe, by certeine familiar voices and stroakinges of his

keper, wherewith he overcometh the naturall rudenes and crueltie of the beaste. The tygre will take foode at the handes of the wildman norished in the caves and desert habitacions amongest theim, where no stripes, nor other awe of man, can move any moderacion to his wodnes or cruell nature: so, likewise, some women, albeyt they are quite devested of all honor or honestie, yet they are founde to reteine some sparkes of civil humanitie, beinge more easelye broughte to a reformacion by gentle order, then reclaimed by the smart of any torture or crueltie. Wherein, notwithstandynge, this countesse seamed to use a more extremety, and excede the doinges of any that ever have bene noted of disorder that waye; for neither gentle perswacions colde allure her, nor feare nor force reduce her to reconcilement or amendement of life, but accordynge to the stone of Scylicia, uppon whom the more you beate to bruse or breake yt in peces, the greater hardnes is dryven into it, so the greater indevor th'erle used to persuade his wyfe, eyther by allurement or offer of correction, the more perversatie he founde in her, with lesse hope of amendement. And as she used a malicious scilence during the discourse of his exhortacion, so she forced in her selfe for the present a wounderfull patience; to th'end that, with the consent of a more convenient time, she might spitt oute the poyson whiche she shrowded secretly under the wynge of her venemous stomacke. Whereby, for a firste proofe of her conninge in the parte she mente to plaie, she forgat not to dissimule her passion and conterfet the simple ypocrate, in suche sorte as a wiser man then th'erle mighte easelye have bene taken in the snare of her deceite; whiche, notwithstandyng, she used in such covert manner, that, within shorte time, she had not only removed al conceites of evill from the head of her husband, but also brought him to an opinion of a marvelous honestie and assured confidence in her. In whyche good vaine, and for a more declaracion of his good mynde towardes her, he observed her fancie so farfurth as upon a soddaine he brake up house in Scavoye and went to Casalia, where laye her inheritance and chiefe possession.

Yf you marke wel the fetche of this woman in procuring

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her husband to depart his contrey, and what a sodaine checke folowed to him, with a false bound to the honor of her selfe, you may easely judge, that a woman once bent and resolved to do evill, hath a wit to ymagine al malice and sorts of mischief to be ministers in the execution of her wickednes; and that neither feare of punishement, imputacion of shame, perill, nor daunger, how mortall so ever they appeare, can staye her from performing the end of her dampnable devise. Wherof the tragedie of Medea, and follie of the frende of Theseus, argueth sufficiently their tickle constancie in vertue, and great zeale and desier to do thinges contrarye to all honestie. Neither doth the egle, soaring in the ayre, conveighe her selfe to so hyghe a gate, by the force and fleight of her wings, as the vaine conceites and ymaginacions of a woman, governed by her owne opinion, filleth her full of devises of iniquitie, with desier and meanes to performe th'effect of any evill. Wherin, as I touch only suche as, having made open sale of their honor, are not worthy eftsones to chalenge their place amongest the societie of chaste and verteous dames, so I hope the same is sufficient to procure my excuse amongest the crewe of honeste ladies and gentlewomen; the rather for that the publicacion and decyphering of the juste infamye of the corrupted sorte, giveth a greater showe of your glorie, and makes your honour and vertue of more reputacion. Neither woulde I be noted in this place of malice to move question of theime whose lives and doinges everie waye are ful of integretie, nor use any pertiall adulacion or flatterie on the behalfe of suche as be notorius of evill in the eye of al the world; but, in making an indiffrent division of the desertes of every degre, to give to either sorte his peculiar title, neither conceiling the corrupcion and villanie of the one, nor carping the vertue and juste renowne of th'other. Whereof I leave the judgement and my excuse in ballance amongest you chaste dames—who, I am sewer, do wishe no lesse a discoverie and punishement of the faltes of others then your selves a juste encrease of glorie and name of reputacion for ever—and retornes nowe to the pursute of our Countesse of Celand; who, dandlinge her husband at Casalia, with a glee of masqued

Phedra.

frendship, kissinge and cherishing him, after a Judas order, who embraced her unfainedlie from the bottome of his hart, adding eftesones a freshe remembrance to his late discurtesye, with a vehement desyer to satisfye the glotte of her fyltie lust. Wherein she accompted the presence and companie of the Countey a speciall ympediment, seing that, so long as she was with him, yt was impossible to water her gardeine with other pott then that which she detested no lesse then th' offer of poison, determyned to give present remedie, and putt herselfe in free libertie, by a secret sleighte and stealinge awaye from her husbande. Wherein, for a first begynning or sewer fondacion of this devise, she levied by secret meanes a great some of money, which she put in banke to ronne in interest to her use, reservinge a thousande doockattes to supplie her necessarie torne till the daye of receite of the usurie or hier of her banke. Wherwith, in the only companie of ij or iij servantes which wer secretaries of her devise, shee taketh the advauntage of a faire nighte, when the clearenes of the moone and starrs favored the diligence of the vacaboundes, and fleethe to Pavia, a towne subject to the state and dukedome of Myllan; where shee hyered one of the faireste lodginges in the towne, whose windowes opened all uppon the street, with certeine backedoares to receive a secret messenger, a shoppe moste necessarie for her trade, and whych also she forgat not to decke and trym upp with faire beddes, riche hanginges, and other accottrementes of glee, more to allure a repaire of gesse, then eyther seamelye or necessarie to her estate. I leave you to judge what *tyntamar* entred the head of th' erle by the soddaine and secret departure of his wyfe, and I aske this question :— How many of you wold have raised the hewe and crye, or dispatched any messengers for the recoverie of so great a losse? I advouche thus muche on the behalf of th' erle, that, at the first noise and brute of th' accident, he did not only enter into tearmes of inordinat rage, with intent to raise the whole contreye, but also was readye to pursue the chasse in person. Albeit, after the furie of his storme was retired, giving place to th' instigacion of reason, and that he had conferred the present effect and fact of his wife with the

She letteth her banke of money ronne in interest at Myllan.

She rouneth from her husbande.

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former circumstance and arguments of licencious desier in her, he rather gave thankes to his fortune for her frendship, then entred into teares or sorowe for th' absence of so lewde a guest. And, seyng her departure had discharged his head of a greate deale of care, he determined, not only to use no impediment to her libertie, but also not to offer himselfe any waye to recover her, whose absence imported an assurance of future quiet and contentement during the remeinder or reste of his age. 'He that is assured' (saith he) 'of the malice of his enemye, hath smal cause to feare his force; for that he is warned to stande upon his guarde againste all doubte or distruste of reason; but suche is in treble daunger, as embraseth in his armes a mortall enemye in th' abite and attire of an assured frende, and, trustyng to the smilynge regardes of the cockatrice, doth not eschew the perill, till she have won the place to shoote furth her stinge of mischiefe. Yf my wyf had taken longer dayes in dissimulinge her malice, my perill had encreased with the ignorance of her wicked intent; where nowe I am not only privye to her whole disposition, but happelie rid of so deceiptful a frende and secrete enemye; who, no doubt wold, not onely have slaundered my bed, with unlawful adulterie, but, in defiling her handes with my blood, woulde one daye have made no conscience to cut my throate, or furthered my death other wayes, by some of her ruffyans or coherentes of iniquitie. I am content with this indifferent pennance, and punishment due to me by ryght, for th' extreme love I bare her, wythout further desyer, that the breath and presence of so pestilent an infection, may eftsones pollute the worste corner in my house. Let her go, and rate her pleasure at what interest she thinkes good; for this so late and familiar experience shall suffice not only to instruct, but also warne me, to beware of suche deceiptful and counterfeite ymages.' And procedynge still with tearmes of complaint, concluded that the honor of a man did neyther depende, nor was any waye defaced, by the disorder or dishonestye of his wycked wyfe; chiefelye where such abuse is derived rather of a corrupte inclinacion of her selfe, then any discurtesie or unseamelye dealyng on his parte. His passion forced hym to exclaime

The honor of a man ought not to be defaced by the deshonestie of his wife.

againste all sortes of women, sparynge neyther state nor degree of that sect, against whome he seamed to inveygh rather by transport then consent of reason, and without all regarde or remembraunce of any one of th'infynite nomber of honeste ladyes; whose simplicite and upright order of lyfe do not only defende themselves from the stinge of any reproche, but also discovereth the villenie of suche as abandone theyr honor wythout respect to honest shame, whiche, as a companion moste familiar, ought to governe and direct the doinges of all women. But now let us resorte to Pavia, and visit the doinges of Blanche Maria, whose renowne in shorte time became of no lesse brute in all the corners and costes of Ytalye, then the Corynthyan Lays thorow all partes of Asya, being withal so prodigall of her libertie, wyth open and unseamelye meanes to make her selfe knowen to the worlde, that in the veray viewe and first begynnynge of her trade appeared infallible arguments of future evils, with a disordered sequeile of lyfe. Albeit she seamed to reserve a certeyne majestie and semblance of respect to her estate, for that she woulde not marche but under enseignes of nobilitie, refusing eyther to bee seene or spoken to of persones of meaner condicion: which delicate and coye order, she seamed to preferr, rather to set a greater price of her merchandise—accordyng to the Grecian curtesan, whom the orator refused for that he wolde not buy his repentaunce at so highe a rate—then to argue any diminution of her lascivius desyer. For her eye had no sooner encountred any younge and lustie gentleman that seamed sufficiently set furthe wyth furniture of nature, and hable everye waye to performe the expectation of her appetitte, but her countenaunce and other outwarde behaviour were readye to make declaracion of her inwarde desyer, roavyng upon hym wythout respect, wyth suche glee and liberall regardes, that he nede no interpretor to decipher her meaninge, nor phisicion to disclose the misterie of her disease: neyther was she anye thynge inferior to Madona Mussalina, the Romaine Princesse, savyng that she haunted the banke and common places, and this performed her exploites in her owne house; the Romaine put no difference betwene carters

Shame ought to direct the doinges of women.

Demosthenes refused the companie of Lays, for that she held a nightes lodging at to high a price.

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and men of greater callynge, and this Demy Greque prayed onely uppon nobilitie and ympes of tender yeres. Wherin albeit she seamed more delicate of taste then the other, yet she exceded all the *bancrowtes* of honor that ever were in this one point, that she was alwayes rather wearie of travell then at any time satisfyed with pleasure, resemblynge a bottomles goolphe, receyvinge all that is putt into it, without castynge anye thinge upp againe. This was the chaste lyfe whiche this good ladie ledd, after she had got the bit betwene her teeth, and the raine of libertie within her owne hande. Whereby you maye judge whether the Myllanoyse or first husbande had raison to refraine her forwarde inclinacion in the firste flame of her youth, seinge that as the greene *ozier* or sallow of ij or iij yeres groth is alwayes more plyable then the greate oke, seasoned either by pollecie or confirmed in hardnes by the continuance of many yeres, so it is necessarie we kepe an awful hande uppon suche youngelynges as appeare sooner ripe in appetit then in governement or discrecion; to the ende that, in plyeng the wax whilest the water is warme, we maye alwayes frame them to the posteye of our mindes, havynge theim to supplie the necessitye of our affaires. And as the connynge grafter, forseing the destruction of his stocke, by the to muche forwardnes of the twigges, and certeine lytle braunches, sukyng up the moysture and sapp whiche should feede the reste of the tree, doth cut theim awaye, to th' ende the principall bowes maye florishe and receive their naturall norriture; so it is not sufficient to minister correction to youth in their tender yeres, yf we reserve not a continuation of awe to accompanie their encrease and ripenes of their age, to prevent the harmes wee see ordinarilye happen by maturitye and to muche forwardnes in desyer to bee free from controlment.

As she was in theis exercises at Pavya continuynge a traine of servauntes, accordynge to her trade and studie, it chaunced that th' erle of Massyno, called Ardizyno Valpergo, came to the service of th' emprour, by whyche occasion hee retired to Pavia, and lodged in the pallais of hys brother there. He was younge, lustie, and geven to all exercises of activitie; of semelie stature, wyth proporcion of lymmes

The firste unlawfull lover of the countesse.

accordinglie, savinge that he halted somewhat of one legg, by reason of a hurte he recevied in a skirmishe of warr, dymynishinge notwythstandinge no parte of hys perfection or shapp of bodye; who, usinge one speciall recreacion in passinge up and downe the streetes, behelde diverse tymes the bewtie of the countesse, syttynge nowe and then in a windowe, gevinge onely a showe of her face, and sometime woulde walke up and downe in a gallarie or lowe hall, presentyng the whole viewe of her bodie. And to drawe the straunger to a more desyer to beholde her, shee woulde sometime appeare in brave attire at the porche or gate of her pallais, speciallye at suche tyme as the earle made hys walke that waye; who, being alreadie gaulled wyth the arrowes of love on her behalfe, pursewed hys queste wyth such devocion and diligence that he conquered at last a convenient tyme and meane to speake to her. Wherin, albeit, he preferred but a simple proffer of hys service with other slight discourses, wherwyth the courtyar or other gentleman of behavyor doth commonly fede the tyme, whilist he is in the companye of ladyes, and that the greate majestie whych shee used, woulde not suffer hym at the fyrste to geve righte judgement of this masqued goddes, yet he saw wel enough that he neded not the whole strength of th'emprours camp to force the place: the which he judged neither to be so strongly flanqued, nor sewerly rampierd, but the valiant souldiour, being furnished to geve the charge with the speare in the rest, might make an entrey without greate peril; chieflie for that the trenches throwen down, and breach alreadie made, the place was sufficientlie assaltable for any meane soldiour. At which he forgat not to convert to the commoditie and advantage of his desier, together with the consent of covenient time and Fortune, who placed theim one daye all alone, wythout any accesse of companie to her chamber, where he forgat not to preferr his request—wyth tearmes of humilitie according to the vaine order of suche ydle personnes as abuse the gift of time in pleading for grace in cases of love—with a franke offer of his bodye and lyvinge, wyth commission to dispose of theim all as she thought good. 'Wherin, good madame,' (saith he) 'it is not

The order of a curtisan to allure men to affection.

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Th' erle Valpergo profferth his service to the countesse.

the sommonce of any synister conceite or evill opynion whiche hath moved me to boarde you so farr, but rather the vehement instigacion of love, forcing me to such an affectioned zeale on your behalfe, that I shoulde do indiffrent wronge to th' estimacion of your honor and injurye to the vowe of my loyall service sworne unto you longe since, if I seame yet to prolonge a conceylement of that whyche the present viewe of your bewtie hath set a broach and committed to open flame. Wherefore, if my presente offer, wyth respect of former merit, lack force to wrest a simple grant of favor at your hand, yet ymagyn (good lady) that in forfeting the pawne whiche I have preferred for the performance of my promisse, I hazarde also the vyolacion of the faithe and lyfe of a gentleman: wherof I yelde you eftesones a seconde confirmacion by the height and authoritie of the skyes, to be more carefull to obeye you, and lyve in the contynuall awe of your commaundement, then curious of myne own health and safetie; wyth this addicion, not to spare at any time to ymploie my carkasse wyth all that I have in the defense of your causes, what condicion or qualitie so ever they ymport.'

The subtill countesse, albeit she knew wel enough that the fyer was not so kindled in the stomake of th' erle as it pleased hym to set a face and fayned show of his passion; and that the large skoape of libertie in his tongue, wyth assurance and constancie in his countenance, argued rather a dissembled zeale then a true transport of affection in his harte; yet, seing hym younge, lustie, and sufficient every waye to aunswere and discharge the combat of her gredie desyer, determyned not to lette slippe the offer of so fytt a praye, whyche shee thoughte woulde suffyce to occupye the place, till she hadde founde an other to enter the lystes, and supplie his lacke. Wherwyth she passed a plaine graunte of her favor under these coverte tearmes:—'Like as Signeur Valpergo, I am not ignorant in th' ordinarie deceites of men, declared speciallie on the behalfe of such as, reapposinge to muche credit in their honestie, do geve slender garde of theimselves, so I canne (I thanke God) contente my selfe to smile at their follies, and take recreacion to heare the braverie of their requests, seaming to burn in the desiers of

She graunteth favor to th' erle.

love, when in deede they are not only farr from such passion, but free from intent to performe any effect of true loyaltie; seaminge also to enterlarde their ymportunities wyth a doble vehemencye, when they go most busilye abowte to make a praie of our bewtie and fragilitie. Whereof, albeit, I accompt you not onlye one of the nomber, but also no lesse desloyall then any of the rest, yet, respectinge the reputacion of your race, I am content to geve credit to your wordes, and accept your offer in such sort as you have promissed; reapposing so muche for my selfe in youre discrecion, that there shall appere in you no want of any thing that belongeth to the governement and wise conveigh of such secret affaires: wherin, if I find an effect of my expectacion, your selfe shal judge of my liberalitie in retorning the merite of your honest frendshipp.' Wherwyth th' alteracion and breache of countenance in her face, argued a present troble and contrarietie of mynde within her, whiche th' erle construinge to procede of a desyer she had to move hym to dismisse all further delaies and dispose hymselfe to th' execution of the thinge so indiffrentlie desyered of theym bothe, put diligence to the thankefull offer of tyme and fortune, in such sorte as, embrasinge her wyth a thowsande sortes of kysses, hee forgat all ceremonies and circumstances, and gave her checkmatt, wythoute any oddes, uppon a lowe bedde or pallet, covered cloase with a vaile or canapie of crymosyne velvet, frindged wyth sylver thrombe: where was such indiffrente likinge on bothe partes, that they resolved at th' instante of other times and howers to meete at the shocke in so pleasant a skirmishe. Wherin as she judged hym hable enough to passe the moosters for suche respectes, determyninge to make stoare of hym till fortune furnished her of a freshe supplie, so, for his part, he founde her so delicate on his behalfe, that he resigned th' authoritie whiche governed hym and his doinges to the order and derection of her, in suche sort as he spake nothing but by the mouthe of Blanche Marya, nor did any thing wherin her councell and commaundement bare not the greatest swaighe; being so drowned in the desyer of his beastlie trol, and blinded wyth the vaile of filthie love, that both day and night were

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indifferent for th' exercise of his pleasure; making her bedd his pryvate lodginge and delicate armes his place of pleasante exercise and tryall of activitie, wyth contynual aboade there; and that wyth suche publike signes and declaracion of his disordered lyvinge, that, to the confirmacion of the common brute whyche passed of their follies, there lacked but some Plautus or Terence to prefer it in publike stage, in the hearing of all the worlde. But what? is it like that shee that had falsed her fayth to a husbande, more honest and vertuous then shee deserved, wold content her selfe wyth the companie of this younge erle? Or who doubtes but suche indiffrent women as have committed their bodies to the generall service of the worlde, are no lesse inconstante in their love, then voyde of shame in devestinge theim of honest vertue to undertake so badd a kinde of lyfe? Neyther do they like so well of any thinge as often change of diot to satisfye their insatiable and beastlie luste, seaminge as it were a champion or challenger, readie to aunswere all coumers. For a familiar proofe wherof, I commit you to th' experience of this ravenouse shee wolfe, Blanche Maria, who, seinge her newe mynyon so sewerly lymed wyth the blushe of her bewtie, that only a simple becke was sufficient to commaunde hym, taught hym a newe croscaprey, wyth a thousand trickes and sleightes in vawtynge. Wherewyth, also, addinge a further experience to his blinde simplicitie, she brought hym now and then to the honor of holdinge the moyle at the doare whilest an other man ridd her errande in the chamber. Whyche trafficke was not wythout greate perill on his parte, for that, as the countey Celand was borne to beare the badge of Cornewal in the forme of a seconde Acteon, so this younge prince was ordeined by destynie to loase hys lyfe, with expectation of al that he attended by the service of kinges or forreine princes, by the wicked treason of a pernicious and common whoare. For in this entercourse of her love wyth Signeur Valpergo, and verye heat of th' amaraus glees betwene theim, Fortune, watchinge to enter the stage, and make sene that her mobylytie diffreth litle or nothinge from the disposition and incerteintie of a woman—according to the meaning of the poetes, whiche have

Acteon transformed into a hart by Dyana.

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Fortune drawen in shape and attire of a woman.

set her furth, in shape, attire, and coollours, like to one of that sect—gave hym an ynklinge of th'inconstancie of hys mistrys. Wherupon followed a litle dymynucion and restrainte of his company from her; who, being whollie transformed into the forme of an unreasonable creature, delyting in nothing but to roune ryot, and hunt for chaunge of pasture, had her eyes and mynde more geven to gluttonie, then her stomake hable to brooke the sondry choice and sortes of dyot, ymployng her selfe whollie to gather newe soldiours to supplie the lacke of th'olde garryson and wearie capteine. Wherein she was assisted wyth more then a necessarie expedicion: for that, within some xviii or xx dayes after Valpergo had taken possession and entred the forte of the countesse, there arryved at Pavya Seigneur Sanseverino, earle of Gaiazo, whose promptenes of wit and perfection of bodie and membres, with a valyant corage of the harte, as they made his name and renowme excede all other betwene that and the mountes, so thys desloyal Aleyne and cruel Medea had no soner taken a simple view on him with a flickering glance of her uncertein eye, but she felt a mocion of vehement zeale sturr and kindle within her; whiche, within shorte tyme, grewe to tearmes of suche certeine affection, that she which earste had dalyed with all men, becomes nowe to doate uppon this newe earle; and that in such sorte that, yf fortune wold not award present compassion, and love lende her a spedie meane to recover th'object of her desier, she seamed not only to enter the tormentes of despair, but also to make smal accompte of the use of longer lyfe, judging by th'exterior and outewarde promises of this younge lorde, that it was only he that seamed sufficient to quenche the thurste of her greedie appetit. Wherfore she began to dispatche her handes of her first frende Valpergo, with whom from that instant she did not onlye refuse to speake, but also, shonninge all places of his presence and repaire, wold not sticke sometime to shott her gates against hym, whych he colde not disgest without certeine injurious wordes and tearmes of reproche. Whereuppon she grounded a grudge of suche mortall enimitie and spite against him, that her mynd reteined a remem-

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brance of the quarrell till her malice had procured his death, (whereof the discourse followeth in his place) desiering (as yt seamed) th' acquaintance of th' erle Gaiazo, as wel for her assistance in th' execucion of th' effect of her present spite against Valpergo, as for the respect of true affection. Wherein as she was whoattlye called uppon by ij earnest solicitours, love and revenge, the one sewinge for a consommacion of her wicked devise, the other prickyng her with desier to procure th' effect of her newe affection wyth the seconde earle, to whom, albeyt she displayed suche manyfeste sygnes of good wyll as eyther the arte of love coulde imagyne or her wanton and ydle brayne devise, yet, seyinge so slender a replye on his parte, withe an encrease of her burning appetite, she thought it necessarie to put spurs to his dull disposicion, makinge no conscience to become the shameles clyent in a cause, wherin the most vile and simple woman that is suffreth her selfe to be sewed unto with no small adoo. Wherein, beinge voyde of meanes to use mutuall conference, she makes this litle letter the messenger of her unseamelie request:—

The countesse woeth th' erle Gaiazo by letter.

'The respect of the place and estimacion whiche I holde (syr) I am sewer will putt you in some amaze at the firste viewe of theis lynes and undoubted messengers of my harte; seinge that, in preferring the lewde suggestion of my unrulie fancie afore the due regarde and consideracion of modestie whiche oughte to accompanie all ladies of honor, I make requeste of that, whose simple remembrance makes me blushe at so greate an abuse. But yf you consider the commission of love, who sommoneth rather by commandement then requeste, with suche a generall awe over all estates, and peculiar authoritie to punishe us women with vehemencye of affection in desyeringe the thinges whiche nature hath forbidden us to attempte, you will not onelye dispense with my rashe follye, but dispose your selfe to take awaye, or at leaste diminish, the greatnes of my present passion; whiche, as it was founded at fyrst uppon the generall fame of your vertues, so the often viewe of your rare perfection of person since your repaire to Pavya, hath forced suche an increase of zeale, with aggravacion of my desyer, that if my destenie

denye me a spedye supplye of releefe, or fortune forbide you to come and visitt my longyng estate, your crueltye shall mortifye my passion and give ende to my lyfe together. Wherein, seinge love hath favored you wyth the victorie and conqueste of her, who earste had power to vanquishe all men, showe your selfe no lesse willynge to embrace the benefytt, then worthie of the glorye, and deferr not (syr) to expose effectes of pitie on the behalfe of her who lyveth onely under the mercie of a simple hope; whiche yf the retourne of your resolucion do make frustrate, and converte my desyer into ayre, the same shall also pronounce the fatall ende of the unhappie, and your moste loyall,

'BLANCHE MARIA.'

This embassage, with further commission by the mouth of the bringer, sturred up no smal alteracion in the mynde of the younge earle; chieflye for that he sawe hymselfe pursued with a franke offer of that, whiche (yf the affectioned zeale he bare to his deare frende and companion the Lorde Valpergo had not stayed th' attempte) he had soughte longe since to obteine. And albeit he judged it neyther tollerable by humanitie, nor th' office of a gentleman, to supplant the pleasure of his frende and marche in the steppes of his praye, yet, being charmed (as it were) with the vehement wordes of the letter, with opinion that the discurtesie were to greate to abuse the liberal offer of so faire a ladye, gave place to the sommonce, and wente immediatlye to her house; where, fyndynge her voyede of all companie in her bedd-chamber, sawe small occasion to preferr halfe the circumstance and courtlike wooing wiche Seigneur Valpergo used: for that both the one and the other, after certeine intisinge kisses and other drawyng allurements performed on both partes, disposed themselves to make present sacrifyce to the goddesse of love, in putting an effect to the thyng which they both thirsted to accomplish with equalitye of desyer. Which amarous practise contynued betwen them certeine monethes, in such sorte, that th' erle was so assotted, and became so ydolatrous on her behalfe, that he performed no devocion to other saint, savinge the unseamely shryne of his new mynion;

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who, also, seing him stande in water to the chin, and whollie subject to the yoke of her awe, determined to kepe a harde hande of the bridle, with intent to make hym the bloddye executioner of her detestable devise against her former lover Valpergo; whose felicitie defended him eyther from the peril of that imaginacion, or els God wold not yet give leave to her wickednes, for that her hope was deceived touching any help or assistance of her newe frend. For Valpergo, seing himself not onely dispossessed of the love of his ladye, but dishonored by her mouthe wyth diverse wordes of reproche in hys absence, judged it no grudge of conscience to mynister semblable revenge on her behalfe, the rather for that she was bothe the authour of the evyll, firste breaker of her faithe without cause, and now the begyner of the quarrell of slaunder. Wherefore, departynge from Pavia, he painted her dishonestie uppon everie poste he passed by, blasynge her armes with suche base and vile coollours, and in suche liberall sorte, that everye companye whiche he haunted was pertaker of the renowne he gave to Blanche Marya; who, hearynge at laste what estymacion she was in thorowe all Lombardie by the reapport of Valpergo, began to enter into tearmes of rage, fyndynge a greate difficultie to dysgeste th' yngratitude of her loste lover—whose doynges, notwithstandynge, shee allowed some tymes by justice, and sawe some reason in hys revenge, for that her inorderlye dealynge opened the fyrste way to his discurtesie—and by and by flattered her selfe with a vaine ymagynacion, that menne were borne to beare what ymposicions so ever suche tryflors as she woulde laye uppon theyme; and that, seynge they were but servantes, they dyd but ryghte to endure and take in good parte any thynge sayed or don by theyr mistres. Albeyt, feedynge still of her malicious coller, with a certeine secret desyer of vengance, determyned at laste to retorne hys discourtesye with no lesse interest then the losse of hys lyfe, with resolucion to procure the spedy effect by the hande of hym whom she presumed to have so muche at commaundement that a simple requeste of her mouthe woulde make hym the minister of that.

Beholde! with what ympudentie and rage thys tygresse

goth abowte to arme one frende agaynst an other; and that yt coulde not suffice to abuse her selfe towardes theim bothe in the filthie use of her bodye, but that, with intent to morder the one, she puttes in hazarde the equall destruction of them bothe, confirmynge her abhomynable adulterye wyth manslaughter and wyllfull morder, a synne moste haynous of all other affore God and manne. Wherein, as her fretting mynde colde admitt neyther quiett nor contentement til her eyes wer witnesses of th' effect of her devise, or at leaste she had put her intent upon tearmes to hym whom she ment to make the bloddie boocher of her beastely wyll; so, attendynge the offer of convenient tyme and place, she was assisted so farfurth, that one nyght as they were in bedd together, and in the chiefest delite of theyr pleasant exercise, she burste soddainly into vehement teares, with sighes and other signes of dollour; in suche sorte that, wyth the counterfaite alarams whiche inwarde sorowe seamed to minister and set a broache, her passion appeared so mortall that her ignoraunt bedfelowe, thinkynge her soule and bodye to be at point to make present seperacion the one from the other, enquired the cause of her grefe, wyth addicion that if yt came by displeasure or wronge don to her by any man, his handes onely should gyve the revenge, wyth absolute contentement to her selfe hereafter. Wherewyth, using the advauntage of his promise, wherein she accompted a sufficiencie to procure the ende of her enemye, tolde hym, that as nature had gyven a certeine facilitie to the vile and base sorte of people to beare and brooke the offer of any injurie, so there was nothynge more contrarye to the condicion of the noble mynde, then to bee touched wyth such villanie as puttes the honor in interest, or the renowme uppon tearmes of publike infamie. 'I saye thus muche (syr)' sayth she, weeting his face wyth the dewe of her waterie eyes, 'for that the Lorde Valpergo, who enjoyed, I can not denye, the like frendshypp I showe unto you, hath not had shame to blab of his doinges, slaundring me wyth no worse tearmes of infamye then yf I were the moste infected strompett that ever abandoned her bodye to the marynors and raskall crewe, alonge the costes of Scicile. Yf he had but made a simple

Morder most hanous in the sighte of God.

She entreateth her second frend to kyll her firste lover.

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vaunte of the favours he founde in me, with participacion but to his frendes, my honor had been but in question where now it is past all doubte. Besides, if he had not added injurius wordes to his indecent slaunder, and made common market tale of the thing which ought to be kepte most secret, I could have disgested the evill wyth an ordinarye pacience. Wherfore, seinge the haynous causes of my greefe import a speciall justice and reason of revenge, lett not the enemie of the honor of your deare Blance Marya escape wythout punishment; but, in accomptynge the wronge whyche I susteine indifferent to us bothe, to bynde me (by the benefytt of this revenge) to a more affeccioned zeale towardes you, with an assured loyaltye even untyll th' extreme dissolucion of my naturall dayes. Otherwayes, yf he lyve in the tryumphe of my slaunder, what cause have I to joye in lyfe, or comfort to expose the best part in me, for the contentement and pleasure of you who stayeth to do me reason to so manifest a wronge?'

Here the young erle felte himselfe double passioned whether he shoulde performe th' exspectacion of his venemous *Basila*, whom he loved without measure, or absteine from violacion of th' innocent blood of his frend, whome the lawe of frendshypp forbad hym any waye to abuse. Albeit, to appease the present rage of the countesse, he promised an effect of her desyer, wyth spedye punishment of hym, 'who is not worthie any waye' (saith he) 'to serve you but in thought,' feedyng her humour wyth franke wordes, dissimulynge, notwithstandynge, that which he thought on the behalfe of the Lord Valpergo, whose honestie he knew to be without malice, and that his discrecion and wisdom woulde not suffer hym to sturre up any synister reaporte without great occasion on her parte. Besides, he considered that the justice of the quarell rested in hym, for that he had taken the pray as yt were out of his mouth; albeit by her procurement, and that after the other had discontinued his hawnte and course of repaire thether. Wherewith, examinynge the circumstaunce at large, he founde the cause farre insufficient to move any breache of frendshipp betwene theim; but determinynge to continue the league, he contented her

wyth a dissembled promise, and restored in the meane tyme the exercise of their former pleasure. Wherein he passed certaine moneths wythout the tender of anye quarell to the Lorde Valpergo, who, retourned (by this time) to Pavya, enjoyed a mutual conversacion with th'erle Sanseverino, wyth suche indifferent familiaritie, that for the moste parte they used but one bedd and one borde, wyth one purse common betwene theim both; whiche was not unmarked of the malicious Blanche Maria, who, seinge so many fyt occasions, wyth the offer of convenient tyme and place, assistinge th'execution of her execrable devise, with provocation to th'erle to performe his promisse, gave judgement of the case as it was, that her wickednes was not hable to force an ennymitie betwene the ij lordes, and that th'erle Gaiazo did but kepe her in breathe with faire wordes onely to continue the glott of his pleasure whiche he tooke of her. Wherefore, disdaynynge so greate an abuse in hym whome (above all men) she reserved as the chief piller of her truste, she determined to make a second experience of the same meane whiche served her torne in the dispatche of her first frende. Wherein, she omitted neyther occasion nor expedicion, for as often as he came to her house, she was eyther sicke or troubled wyth other busynes that she coulde not kepe hym companie, not lettynge somtime to shoott her gates against hym. All whiche because she sawe lacked force to make hym refraine, she retired to th'assistance of pollecie, desyerynge hym wyth simple and colde termes to do her so muche honor as to forbeare from hensfurth all access to her house, for that she was in mynde to retourne to her husbande, with whome th'effect of attonement was alredye wroughte by certeine her frendes; who (beinge upon the waye to fetche her hoame) she woulde not by any meanes shoulde finde her in the attire of a cortisan or woman makinge love. 'Besides (syr)' saith she, not without some dissembled teares, 'I feele a remorce of conscience on the behalfe of the longe abuse I have used towardes hym, and that, albeit my offence procedynge of my follye, seames not altogether worthie of free pardon, yet it maye appeare in some sorte excusable; for he that confesseth his faulte gyveth greate argument of

She discontinueth her frendship with the Lord Gaiazo.

Some faultes may be excused that can not be pardoned.

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amendement, and restoreth the trespasse to sufficient recompense: desyerynge you for ende, to have no lesse consideracion of my present case, then heretofore you have founde no wante of good wyll in me to satisfye the respecte of your pleasure at all tymes.' Wherewith (to preferr a more credit to her suborned discourse) she promised hym a contynuacion of favor, wyth assuraunce of unfayned good wyll, so long as nature was content to lende her the use of lyfe.

The erle, whether he gave faythe to her fayned wordes or dissembled a credytt for the nonst, yet he seamed to perswade a trothe in the matter; for that, from the hower of suche conference, he checked the humour of hys accustomed desyer, usinge exquisitt medecines to mortifye that blynd affection whiche so longe had kepte hym in captivitie in the bottomles goolphe of his Pyemount. And because he woulde aswell remove the cause as take awaye the disease, ferynge leaste eyther the viewe of her presence, or some force of newe charme, mighte eftesones enchante hym and sett abroche the humor of former desyers, he retired immediatlye to Myllan. He feared also the fall of some soddaine mischiefe; chieflye for that he had sufficient experience of the cursed disposicion of this viper, whose harte was so infected with the poysoned ayre of every syn, that, beinge wearye of the exercise of whordome, she woulde make no conscience to furnishe the stage with unnaturall morders. For what exspectation of other frute is in them whose mindes are cleane dispoiled of vertue, if not suche as are allowed by the guyde and wicked spirite that governeth their diabolicall disposition; or who is ignoraunt of tyrannye of a woman converted whollye into the appetit of rage and revenge? Neyther is her crueltye any thyng inferior to the devouring monster, and excedes everye waye the brutishe inclination of the barbarous sorte of creatures; whose rage, albeit, now and then procureth them to use force against the natural procreation and frutes of their owne wombes, yet do they staye to committ any kinde of crueltie to suche as haye traffiqued wyth them in the trade of licencious luste, accomptinge no greater sacrilege or profanacion of the lawe and ceremonies due to their goddes, then to pollute their handes wyth the

The barbarious more curious then we in observinge their lawes.

blodde of suche as earst have supplied the luste of their sensual pleasure. Wherin, if they whych had no knowledge of God, nor feared the devill, and voyde altogether of discipline and experience in humanitie, reserved a certeine honor and respect to nature, why shoulde there be eyther free dispense or tolleracion of punishment to the wretches of our age, who, notwythstandynge the dayly use of the lawe, written by the very fynger of God, and reveiled unto us by hys prophetes and apostles, with diverse threateninge inhibicions noted in th' infailible booke, do not feare to offende the majestie of the higheste, not only in stayninge theyr sowles wyth the spot of adulterie, but also in dyenge the earthe wyth the blodd of their bretherne and fellowes in Christe: wherein this historie shal present you with sufficient profe for this time?

The Lord Gaiazo had no soner lefte Pavya then this infernal goddesse began to attempte the recoverie of her firste lover Valpergo: wherin notwithstandinge there apeared an equalitie of doubt and difficultie, chieflie for that she feared that he that laste left her had diciphered her intent, wyth revelacion of the meane she had devised to procure hys deathe. But what enterprise is it that he dare not attempte whose mynde is the bondeman and slave of syn? Wherin, albeit the beginninge seame to ymport a certeine difficultie, for that the soule preferreth a resistance, and the conscience waveringe is moved to a remorse and remembrance of repentance, yet when a man is alreadie become old in syn, and the harte envyroned with the braunches of iniquitie, the wycked hath a more facilitie in th' execucion of mischiefe, then he that is good hable to kepe the renowne of vertue: evenso when youth is norished in ympudencie, and age devested of honeste shame, there is no perill can make the one afraied, nor ymputacion of reproch geve cause to the other to blushe. Like as this ympudent Pyemountoyse, renewinge the traffique of her aunciente wickednes, practised so far wyth the familiars and frendes of hym whose deathe (as you harde) she earste conspired by malice, excusinge herselfe so amplie by embassages and letters of vehement perswacion, that he was content to heare in what sort she

Shame as necessarie for age as awe for yong men.

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was hable to purge herselfe. Wherin her justificacion was the sooner admitted for that the judge was not only pertiall on her behalfe, but rather enclyned to foolishe pytie then disposed to enjoyne juste pennance. Shee promised by protestacion of fayth and religious othe, not only to become hys subject and slave so longe as her soule was caried aboute uppon the mortall chariot of her bodye, but also gave hym at th' instant a pawne of her lyfe wyth all that she had, for the performance of her laste promise. Here was the peace eftsones concluded betwene the wicked countesse and unhappy earle, whose articles were registred and seales put to the night folowinge, when the Lorde Valpergo was restored to the possession of the fortresse whiche earste was revolted, and lyved longe under the awe of an other prince. Wherin, as they thus renewed the rounde of their amarous daunce, the one fynding a more skoape of libertie under her recovered lover then afore, the other resolved whollie to observe th' apetite of his ladie, beholde a seconde desyer of blodd and suggestion of morder appearing eftsones in the face of this Megera; who, croppinge altogether the hearbe of revenge, longed nowe for the destruction of hym, who (as you harde) promised to do sacrafice on the bodie whyche presentlie she embrased and helde in moste estimacion: wherof, if she had beene demaunded the cause, I thinke she coulde have geven no other reason of her malice then that, delitinge in bloddie enterprises, shee accompted it a pryncipall vertue to commit mischieves of greateste detestacion: for the whyche notwythstandynge the rewarde of mordore was thondered uppon her at laste, wyth a shamefull and miserable ende to her selfe and untymelye deathe of hym, who, as the fyrst companion and next neighbour to her follie, wyth equall perticipation of filthie pleasure, reapposed to muche truste in the villenie of her who preferred vice afore vertue, and toke pleasure in the devise of bloddie affaires: whereof you shall have the discourse at large in the last act of this historie.

Death the due rewarde of morder.

Blanche Marya, seinge her so rampierd in the harte of Valpergo, that her only worde was currant to commaunde hym, determyned to prefer hym to th' office of a morderer uppon the person of hym who earst refuced

the charge. Wherin, addinge an expedicion to her devise, one night beinge in bedd together, after she had embrased and feasted him frankly wyth the filthie follies in love, wherein she had more then sufficient experience, shee discontynued her kisses wyth a soddaine scilence, and drawinge her traison a farr of, tolde hym that it is longe since she had to present hym wyth one request of speciall favour: wherin, because shee doubted eyther to move hys displeasure, or receive a repulse, she hathe not onely defferred to be ymportunate, but stayed to declare the cause; 'whyche' (sayth she) 'althoughe it touche you no lesse then the savegarde of your lyfe, and unworthie infamye to your deare Blanche Marya, yet is the respecte of your favor of such authoritie wyth me, that I had rather use scilence, with your frendshipp and contentment, then bee th'awthor of the thinge that should incense you to anger.' He gave her not only libertie to make her demaund, but assurance (for hys part) to performe the effect at what price so ever it were. 'For' (saith he) 'if the matter ymport any perill to me, it behoveth me to use care of my lyfe, but if the honor of you be abused or your selfe destressed, you can not ymagyne the diligence I will put to the revenge of your wronge, and undertake all your quarelles. Wherfore doubte not, good ladye, to ymploye hym, who lyvethe but to serve you, and is readye to dye to doo you pleasure.' Here shee asked hym of the frendeshyype betwene th'erle Gaiazo and hym, and what assuraunce hee hadde of hys loyaltie. 'Suche experience' (sayth hee) 'as nothinge is hable to dissolve our amytie. For I woulde not stande to be intreated to offer my bodie to presente daunger to remove his perill, nor hee (I am sewer) woulde make anye conscience to redeeme my extremetie wyth the hazarde of his owne lyfe. Neyther doo wee use other thenne a common conversacion of all thinges betwene us. But nowe to the cause of youre question.' Wherewyth the traitresse, seynge sufficient wordes passed in circumstaunce, thoughte nowe tyme to broach a vente for her poyson, wherefore kissynge hym in more amarous sorte thenne ever hee felte hym selfe embrased afore, tolde hym the poyntes wherein hee was deceived touchynge the truste

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hee seamed to reappose in hys frende. 'For' (saythe shee) 'you are not soo constante and assured on hys behalfe as hee full of villanye in dyssemblynge thee malice whyche hee hathe of longe hatched under the winge of hys deceytful harte. And, to use a simple playnes in soo sewer a case, you have cause to geve none other judgemente of hym thenne as youre moste cruell and capitall ennemye in all the worlde. Wherein because I wyll not presse you to be credulous of a dreame, nor move you to beleve anyethynge whose author is not of sufficiente authoritie, you shal understande that hee advowched noo lesse thenne I have reapported by the breathe of hys owne mouthe, at suche tyme as hee practysed wyth mee in youre late absence, wyth thys addycion, that hee shoulde never enjoye a perfectte quiett of mynde nor taste of the benefite of assured reste or reappose til his hands had made morsells of your body and devyded al your partes into smal peces; confirminge at the same instaunte hys bloddye resolucion by othe of the honoure and lyfe of a gentlemanne, that, wythin the compasse of noo longe tyme, hee woulde bydde you too such a banquette that you shoulde not neede anye longer to bee carefull of the worlde, nor myndefull to make love to ladyes. Wherein, hee seamed so resolute and grounded in his malice that (notwithstanddyng all the perswacions I colde prefer) I colde never wrest from him the originall or cause of this mortall grudge. And albeit at that tyme I was entred into termes of collour agaynste you, with more justice to further his spite then reason to prevent your perill or showe favor in the savynge of your life, yet the remembrance of our auncient love (as a vertue but halfe mortefied or dead in me) moved me to suche a remorse on your behalfe that I dyd not onlye th' uttermost of my indevor to remove the vaile of his entent, but also desyered hym with teares to desyste from suche enterprise, whilest I was in place where you abode; for that I colde not endure the viewe of your injury, and much lesse see you distressed to death, with out the spedye sacrafyce of myne owne lyfe. Whereunto he gave not onely a deaff eare, but bounde him eftsones to his former protestacion by a seconde othe, that eyther hys dead carkasse in the place shold witnes hys good

wil, or els he wolde delyver the world of the Lord Valpergo. All which I had no meane (as then) to imparte unto you, by reason of your absence and small accesse you had hether. Wherin (sir), seing since then your felicitie hath defended you from daunger and consomacion of his intent, so nowe I beseche you not only to stande uppon your garde in defending his malice, but also to prevent his pernicius resolucion with an acte of equall curtesye: for yt is more wysdome to take awaye the lyfe of your enemie, then, in givinge place to his malice, to comit your bodye to the mercie of his morderinge hande. Besides yt is no breache of vertue to requite th'intent of injurye with an effect of equall revenge and your wisdom shold be of greater estimacion, and his traison more haynous (for that he hathe first abused and broken the lawe of frendshyp), in dressinge suche mortall ambushes againste so deare a frende. Wherein, for my part, as I have discovered the whole conspiracie under a franke reapport of an unfained trueth, so, beinge no lesse carefull of your savetie then curius of myne owne lyfe, waghinge theim both in the ballance of indifferent zeale, I wishe you to followe my advise in preventyng so ymmynent a daunger; and, for a more assurance of your savetie, to offer th'assalte to hym that hathe alreadye sworne your destruction. Wherein also you shall performe the vertue of a valyant knyghte, with full satisfaction of the desyer of her, whom you can nott so amplie gratefye, if you presented her with the fre gifte of the best dukedome in Italye. And nowe shall I see an effect of the love you beare me, who eftesones desyereth you not to suffer him to live any longer that triumpheth without measure in the unworthie slaunder of your most affectionate Blanche Maria.'

Yf the laste wordes of this folishe lady had not broughte her whole requeste in suspicion, her importunities peradventure had procured a consent in th'erle; who, conferrynge the pointes of her discourse with her vehemencie in persuading, founde, in deede, that her chiefest meanyng tended to the defence of her owne quarell. Whereuppon, he entred into a pawse, measuring in the secret of hys mynde the tearmes of her present malice with experience and diverse

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proffes of the fydelitie of his frende, whom he knewe to be more assured in vertue then to ymagyn so great a villanie against him. And albeit he knew yt was but a fetche of his lady to sowe the seedes of quarrel betwene th' erle Gaiazo and him, yet, to flatter her fond humor for the time, he promissed to become the mynister of her cursed will: for a more shewe and expedicion whereof, he tooke his leave, and repaired ymediatlye to Myllan, where he ymparted to the Lorde Gaiazo everie point and article of the venemous discourse of the Countesse, her conclucion and burnynge desyer of his absolute destruction, with special sute that only his handes might be the shamefull execucioners of her execrable devise. Wherwith th' erle Gaiazo was no lesse astonied then he had cause. For, conferring the tearmes of his present reapport with a freshe remembrance of a former conspiracie (by his handes), touchinge the death of hym whom she had now suborned to procure the destruction of himself, cryed oute of th' yniquitie of the gods in sufferynge the earthe to bee infected with the breathe of so wicked a woman, and exclaymed agaynst nature in that she dyd not abridge the course of lyfe in so horrible a monster, 'whose pestilent ayre' (saith he) 'yf God defend not his people is hable to corrupt a whole countreye. Oh! how justelye hathe God visited the synnes of her father for his cursed usuries upon his wretched doughter, and rightly punished the villenies of her predecessors in an ymp sprong of so vile a stocke. How is yt possible to make a froward kite a forwarde hawke to the ryver, or the boochers curr to drawe a true sent to the hurte deare? Likewise this pattorne of corruption—beynge the doughter of a villaine, who was borne to no more porcion then vij foote of inheritance in the church yard, and her mother more fair then chast, and lesse vertuous then honeste—hath not onlye abandoned her contrey and husbande for the glott of her insatiable luste, aunsweringe all comers without excepcion in the singler combat of her beastly desyer, but also is come to keepe an open boocherie or slaughter house to execute the nobilitie of Italy. But, for my parte, yf yt were not for the dishonour that wolde attende me in defyling my handes with the blode of suche a

The sin of the father punished upon the children.

filth, I assure you I wold drawe her by the haire to the publike theatrie, or place of execucion in Myllan; where, after she had confessed how often, and in what sorte, she hath desiered me with her handes cloased and eyes full of dyssemblynge teares, regardyng the majestie of the heavens, to committ morder uppon my deare Valpergo, thies handes should devide her villanous carkasse into more peeces then there bee dayes in the yere. And, besydes, I was never of so vile or base condicion but that I durste discover and advowche what grudge so ever I had conceived agaynst any man: neyther doo I thinke that you have other opynion of me then to bee one of your moste loyall and assured frendes.' Whereunto th' other replyed that th' only respect of the fidelitie he reapposed in hym keepte hym from performynge her pernicius and bloddie sommonce, and that he had not only disclaymed her acquaintance, and companye also, but abandoned the place of her beynge, for feare of further enchauntement. 'And seynge' (sayth he) 'that God hathe holden hys holye haunde over us, and our fortune hetherunto defended us from daunger, lett the viewe of our perill passed withstande the offer of future mischiefe, and in eschewyng the ayre of suche infection let us also from hensfurthe dysmisse oure devocion to that ympp and ymage of Sathan. Had yt not bene a greate comendacion to us to have entred into quarrell, and committed mutuall slaughter one of an other, for the recreacion and pleasure of such a minion; whose simple remembrance, I assure you, is so hatefull unto me at thys present that I fyde a falte in my selfe that in byddynge her farewell I gave her not an hundreth estockadoes thorowe the bodye, to th' ende the example and due hyer of her badd lyfe myghte procure a terrour to others that thurste after the blood of such unnaturall morders? Albeyt, as the course of her wretched lyfe argueth an unhappie end, soo I dowte not but her miserable deathe wyll take suffycient revenge of the wronge she hathe offred to us bothe. In the meane tyme I wishe in us both an utter forgetfulnes of her and her follies. And, seynge the gayne shee hathe gott by us maye bee cowched in the leaste corner of her coffers, wee have small cause to greve

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in any losse, savynge in the ympairinge of our reputation for yeldyng honour to one so farr unworthie of our companie.' Wherewyth ended the discourse betwene the ij young Lords, who (ever after) forgatte not to contynue the remembrance of theyr venemous *Basilike* wyth woordes of oppen infamye in what companye so ever they were; bothe what intisynge meanes she hadde to traine menne to her lure, and wyth what subteltyes shee dismyssed theyme beynge wearye of their companye, or when she sawe an offer of fresh supplye. The brute whereof, albeyt gave her certaine frettynge alarams at the stomake, yet, nature hadde lente her suche a grace, that she neyther blushed at the same nor was moved to remorse wyth the viewe of her evill, but disgested both the one and the other wyth an ordynarie face of shameles complexion. Wherein, notwithstanding, she was neyther so precise nor constant but the inwarde grypes she felt had almoste forced a depryvacion of libertie and sences, the rather with the view of an Italyan epigram inveighinge bitterlie agaynst her disordered lyfe, composed as they sayd by th' erle Valpergo, whyche because I never sawe nor have meanes to recover a true copie I leave without judgement or reapport: but thus muche I dare advowche of her collerike passion, procedinge chieflye by that invective, that if she had had eyther capteine or soldiours at her commaundement she had made ij faire *Anotomyes* of bothe their bodies. Wherof, notwythstandynge, Seigneur Valpergo escaped not without sharpp pennance, as one uppon whom she founded her greatest grudge; for that, as he was the fyrst that skirmished with her, hande to hande, in her cloase chamber, so he was the last that brake his fayth and dissembled th' effect of his promisse. By this tyme every post and posterne in Pavya was painted wyth pamphelettes, written in proase and verse of the bowntefull lyfe of the countesse, every comedie and stage plaie babled of her vicious trade, the bells rong of her inordinat luste, and the birdes in the ayre cryed out agaynste her, in suche sorte that she did not onely refraine to come abrode and show her selfe eyther in the streete or windowe, but, ymagyninge that the chaunge of ayre and place woulde take away the

blaspheymous noyse of the brute, trussed up her baggage and departed by moone-lighte, wythout sounde of trompett, from Pavia to Myllan: where, as she was first invested wyth robes of honor by mariage with the Viscount Hermes, so her destynies seamed to reserve that place as a witnes and theatry of her degradacion, not only of honor but also of lyfe. For she had not longe so jornied at Millan but there arryved a capteine, wyth a charge of certeine trowpes of horsmen, called Don Pierro de Cardonne, a Scycylyan borne, and bastarde brother of th'erle of Colysan; whose father, dyinge at the battel faught at Bycoque, lefte hym no other porcion nor revenue but such as he gatt by the enterteinement of the warres. His age exceded not xx or xxi yeres. Somwhat swarffye of complexion, and mallencollike in the regarde of his countenaunce, wyth a skar or hurte in the face, lent hym by chaunce in a fraye, but, for the rest, sufficiently furnished with good proporcion. Who made his chief exercise to passe up and downe the streetes; where, glauncinge nowe and then upon this alluringe ymage of Venus, tooke no tyme to debate the matter at large, but uppon the sodaine became extremelie in love wyth her; in suche sorte as he entred into devise to have familiar conference and make an offer of his service unto her, who, better experienced in the trade of love then he, albeit she sawe hym younge and hable enoughe to aunswere the combatt of her luste, yet, to sturre upp a more vehemencie of love and geve her selfe a greater incorporacion in his harte, she lewred hym by peecemeale tyll she had sufficientlye manned hym, and framed hym by the measure of her owne will. For yf this younge pigeon of the fyrste plume chaunced to espye her out of the windowe, yeldynge her reverence wyth a sighe, accordynge to the vaine Spanyarde, she woulde not sticke to requite hym wyth a countenaunce of semblable curtesie, and soddainelye shott the casement, and withdrawe her selfe from his sighte, leavynge the sellye captaine, tyeringe upon a taste of pleasure, enterlarded also wyth a desperate hope never to enjoye her otherwayes then in secrett and uncerteine wishes. And, albeit he was of sufficient experience to traine and leade his men wyth corage

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enough in the feelde, yet seamed he no lesse voyde of skill then farre from audacitie, and so ignoraunt in the pursute of this queste, as if he had never made courte to any lady of reputacion or honor; whiche forced the rather a vehemencie of his tormente on the behalfe of his newe mystres, whose majestie and coye estat, keping alwayes within her pallays, as yt argued a certaine degree of honour, so the same gave also a greater increase to his passion with intent to do her al honor he colde. For besides that he passed by her gate everye daye in greate braverie of chaunge of horse and apparell with his men moosteryng aboute hym and other pomppe of a capteine, makynge his horse make good the *Toto Pomado* with other loftie tornes above grounde, when he came against the windowe that yelded the first view and prospect of her beauty; yet, for a further declaracion of his affectioned service, he walked one evening a long the pallaice of his ladye, with a noyse of softe musicke to procure her to come to the windowe; when himself tooke a treble lute and gave her a good night, in a songe no lesse dolefull in note and tune then of desperat substance, with such stoare of sighes and regards of pitie in his face, that who had seene his ghastelie countenance at that time wold have judged him to bee served with the laste processe and sentence diffynitive of his lyfe, or that he had made love to one of the blood royall in Spaine. In the ende of whyche moarning musike, Dom Pierro, as one out of hope to recover any one jote of favor of his mistrys, beinge upon his departure and retire to his lodging, was requested to come in by one of her women; who, opening the gate, conveighed him alone thorowe a faire gardeine into a large gallerie, honge on either side with sondrie sortes of pictures and tables of love and follie, where the countesse did not only give hym greate thankes for the honour he dyd her with hys solemme musycke, but also yelded hym suche other choice of familiar curtesye that he seamed rather astonied with the presence of the place he so muche desyred, then hable to bestowe anye thankes or other symple showe of dutie uppon hys newe gooddesse; who, seynge hys symplicitie, thoughte yt was now time to stoppe the lewer uppon him, and give him some assurance by wordes

and effect, as well as she had trained him so far by arguments of outeward glee. Wherfore, taking him by the hand, she ledd him to a lowe bedd furnished with greene satten, where (beinge set together) she used this shorte order of collacion unto hym:—

The countesse to her last lover.

'Albeyit (syr) the show of my present curtesy may stur up in you some cause of synister suspicion, the rather, for that, havinge no other knowledge nor assurance of your honest behavior then a simple reaport of your name and nobilitie, I have gyven you credit to enter my house at so indecent an hower; yet, being in som part excused by the libertye of our contrey, which excedes the strait inhibition of the ladyes in Spaine and Scycylya, I am also to defeate all sortes of imputation that waye by the speciall regarde of honor I have alwaies used on the behalf of straungers; towardes whom, as I was never a nigarde of my liberalitye, specially when they do me that honor to visitte my house, so for your parte, for that I fynde no cause as yet eyther to disclaime or discontinue my accustomed bountye from you, I am content to assure you no lesse welcome then any man that ever had access hether; with commission that the doare, beinge readye to bee opened at what hower so ever you knocke, you maye bee bolde to dispose of me and myne no lesse franklye then yf the propertye of all that I have rested in your selfe.' Which enterteinement, as it was unloked for of Seigneur Pierro, so the liberall offer of his mistress toke awaye the passion of his domme traunce, and not only restored hym againe to the libertye of his speache, but also renforced hym wyth a new corage to put his request upon tearmes and make a tender of his service; wyth protestation that, if she woulde passe a graunt of her good will, and admitt hym for her secret servant and frende, he would use such indevor to make declaration of the dutifull zeale he bare her, that she shoulde fynde hym nothing inferior to any gentilman that ever made profession of love or other service to hys ladye, nor have cause any way to mislike her choise; for that he wold never be so rash in promise as redie to expose an effect, nor she so willyng to require as he twise diligent to parforme th' uttermost of her commaundements. She,

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felyng her selfe clawed in the place that ytched most, replyed with a smyling countenance, that 'th'experience of the often breache of promisse in suche as use to court us simple ladyes wyth the marchandise of love, doth argue so much th'inconstancye of men' (saith she) 'that, for my part, if I sawe a present effect of true loyaltye before myne eyes, yet could I hardlye be brought to repose eyther credit or assurance in any promise; seing men them selves nowe a dayes are infected wyth the ayre of such fragility that they neyther respect the honestye of their word, nor the vertue in parformyng the least effect of a thousand liberal offers they make at unwares. Albeit, as he that chargeth the guyltles with the offence of the murderer doth wrong to his innocencye, so I have learned that it is a speciall vertue to be pertiall in opinion toward straungers, and judge the best of every man. Wherfore, for your part (syr) if you will enlarge the offer of your fyrst faith with this addicion, that I may be bold to imploye you in one speciall affaire of mine at suche time as I shall sommon you therunto, I am content not onely to put you in possession of your request, but also to bynde my selfe to no lesse loyaltye on your behalfe then ever appeared in any ladye towards her faythful servant.' The captaine, that would willyngly have sacrifised hym selfe for the raunsome of her favor, stoode not to examine what charge she would enjoyne him unto, but confirmed an assurance with sundry sorts of othes; being no lesse rashe in the promise of evel then hastie to performe th'execution, as herafter you shal heare. Here was brewed the broth or preparatyve of the fatall obsequies of her former love, and the earnest penny given of the blodie bargayn and death of Seigneur Valpergo. For she, by the too liberall and unhoneste vent of her honor, made him the *borreau* and unnatural executioner of noble blod, defacinge by the same meanes the gentrie of his house, which he ought to have preserved til the last drop of blood in his body. And remaining there al that night, she made him so pleasant a banquet of delicat kysses and other exercises of the bed, that the more he tasted of the pleasure the more he thrusted with desyre to continue the sport; and the subtil Cirses, for her part, semed so vehement in love,

with dissimuled arguments of unfayned affection, that, in persuading himselfe of the victorye of her good wyl, he thought he had made a conquest of the whole easte parte of the worlde; seming so drowned in the devocion of his newe sainte, and charmed with the enchauntementes of her art —which, peradventure, lente her some power or assistance of legeirdemain to force his humor of earnest zeale—that if she had sayd the worde he had made no conscience to have committed the whole citye of Myllan to the mercie of fyre and gunpowder, lyke as Blouse de Cume was redye to put fyer into all partes of the cytie of Rome if the sedicius Tyberyus Gracchus had geven it hym in charge. Suche is the rage and frantyke folye of youth when they suffer their amarous transport to excede the caryr of reason or discression, and from this fountayn have distilled heretofore many destructions of realmes with subvercions and alteracions of monarchies. Wherin also may be noted a marvelous corrupt and vaine disposicion in such as wyl rather effect and haunte the companye of a publike curtysan then honor the vertue of a chast lady, although she were his lawful wyfe and companion of bedd. And yet those gallandes wyll not sticke to jeste and point at the maried man, governed somtime by the sage advice of his lawful wife, wher they seme readye at the commaundemente of a strompet or arrand whoare, not only to hazarde the price of their honor, but also (in favoring th'instygacion of her wickednes) to make their testament upon a skafolde layinge their heades under the edge of the sworde of justice. Wherin I nede not torne over many bokes for copy of examples, seing you may be sufficiently satisfyed wyth the view of the folye of this bastarde of Cardonne in performinge the suggestion and malice of this mordering countesse: who, seinge her captayne sufficientlye framed to the postey of her wyll thoughte it was now time to put him in remembrance of his promise, and somon him to the revenge of them that thought no more of her conspiracyes nor traynes of treason. Wherin as the howre approched that her lascivious trade of life shoulde be enjoyned to open pennance, and the wrong and violacion of faith to her husband, with her pernicious intentes and

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effectes of murders, receyve theire due hyre and punishment; and that the rage of destenie woulde not be appeased til som man weare committed to execution; so, for a more expedicion of the fatall ende of her miserable lyfe, she entised her bastard lover into a close arbor in the gardin, where only the byrdes weare witnes of their discours, and brake with hym in this sorte :—'Yf nature, sir, hath gyven to every one a speciall care to holde the use of lyfe moste deare, with a peculyar desyer to favor the cours of our dayes wyth so long a tearme as we can, how much more are we bounde to embrace and be carefull of that whiche causeth us to lyve wyth a singuler renome from amongst the rest of the baser sort of people; who, lyenge alwaye in watche to marke oure order of lyving, are no lesse glad to have an occasion of slaunder then redye to impart it to all the worlde; with such pertialitye of unworthie bruit, that the greater we seame in degree, the more hainous they make our offence, and mortal fautes, not only scarse noted, but also tollerable in meaner personages? Wherin as we women are most incident to the awe of that malicious clymat of people—both for that they sift us and our doings more narrolye then the rest, and because we beinge the weaker companye, are not armed with sufficient force to resiste their rage—so the indifferent sorte ought not to be rashe in judgement on their sydes, nor gyve sentence of discredit or dishonesty againste us, the rather by a sinister suggestion of suche a vulgar and barbarous crewe; neyther ought we to spare or feare anye sort of revenge whiche maye advaunce the recoverye of that wherof we are wrongfully devested.

'Thus much I have inferred (syr) as a preamble to the request I meane to make; which, I take God to witnesse, procedes not so much of desyer to pursue the revenge of wrong I have alredie received, as to make knowen to all the worlde wyth what integritye I go about to preserve the renome of my former reputacion; knowinge ryghte well that the earthe beareth nothing so precious or of so great value that is hable to restore or make good the forfeiture of the honor of a ladye of equall *calibre* and callinge to mee. And because I wil not kepe you in long suspence, nor with tedyous

circumstance move anye myslike to hym that hath offered to justify my cause against them whose wickednes have procured these tearmes of juste complaynte, it may lyke you to understand this:—As, not long sins, I remayned at Pavia wyth a trayne convenient for my degree, mayntaynynge court and hospitalitie in suche sorte that the greateste estate seamed content wyth myne ordynarie, so, amongest the rest of the repayre and accesse to my house, I was vysited wyth an often hawnt of two earles of equall nobylytie and semblable discent of honor; to whom, albeit, I used an indifferente countenaunce exposing no great argument of famylyaritie on their behalfes then (as you se) I show to every gentleman, yet, forgetting th' estymacion of their owne race, and ranke which I hold, they have semed of late so unthankfull to the honor I used towards them, that I fynde a returne of the meryt of my curtesye wyth a general brute of open slaunder, begon and contynued by them, who also cease not as yet to endevor to make my name no lesse notoryous of infamye, then if I weare the most common curtisan in Rome or Venyce. Wherin, as the vertue of my innocencye is hable to satisfye th' opynions of such as know me—for that th' integretie of my life hetherunto parswades them that I am bothe belyed by malyce and slaundred wythout cause—so al straungers, and specyallye the vulgar sorte, conferringe my delycate and brave order of lyvinge wyth parnicious rumor of these gallandes, doughtes not to confirme their vylaynes wyth an absolute judgement that I am no lesse dishonest in dede then their brute hath published in every corner and cuntrye of Italye. Wherof, besydes that myne owne conscyence doth absolve me, yet dare I pleade and appeale to the testymony of your selfe to depose the contrarye, protestynge unto you by the heyght of the hyghest throne in heaven, that onlye you have vanquyshed the chastyty of Blanche Marya; who, yf she should anye waye lose your presence, could not enjoye the ayre of Mylan four and twentye howers, for that those roysters and slaunderus earles have brought me in so bad a tast amongest all honest companye; and yet woulde I not depart without a revenge of the wronge they have done me. Wherein, yf I can not

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be assisted wyth the helpe of anye man, I assure you this carcasse shall eyther be found dead in th' enterprise, or these handes shall comitt the fatall execution of these corrupt wreches whose malice have set abroche the vessell of unworthye slaunder to myn honour and estymacion.' Wherwyth she forsed a sodayn complexion of dolor in her face, in such sort that the teares which distilled from her eyes dropped all alongest her chekes and brestes of the coollour of th' azured alablaster, and watered the whole bosom and body of the Scycilyan; who, havynge no other god but the countesse, and seynge th' ympetuositie of her distres, enquired of her in a mervelous rage what he was that durste abuse her who had at commaundement a captaine, with his whole enseigne of men at armes and soldiours, ready to march at the sounde of her drom to defende her quarrell and take vengance of such as oppresse her; swearyng at th' instante, by the faith and honor of a soldior, that if he knewe the names of thies ympudent wretches, al the worlde shold procure no dispense of their death, and he only wolde cutt theym in as manye peces as there be members of their wicked bodyes. 'Wherefore' (saith he) (ymbrasing his infernal goddesse) 'give me only a note of their names, and you shall see what difference I use betwene doyng and sayinge, simple wordes and dedes of effecte; and do away thies teares, withoute further remembrance or care to revenge your enemyes, for you shall see that I will tonse theym so conyngly, that herafter they shal neede no barber to rownde their haire.'

This franke promisse, with the liklyhode of spedye effecte, breathed suche a freshe ayre of consolacion into the mordering countesse, that after she had coolled and embrased hym in a thousande sortes, with an offer and liberall dedication of her life, with all that shee had, even untyll the laste and extreme dropp of her blodde, tolde hym the names of her enemies; 'who,' saithe shee, 'are not hable to make good anye waye the forfeiture of myne honour but by their deathe and perentorie destruction.' Wherewith he willed her eftsones to dismisse all care and reapose herselfe uppon him. 'For,' saithe he, 'afore th' expiracion of many daies,

you shal heare such newes as you long for.' Wherin he failed neither of the tyme nor effecte of his promise; for that the nexte night hee was advertised by certeine espialls, which he had set for the purpose, that th'erle Valpergo supped in the towne. Wherfore, he armed him self with twentye menne at armes of his soldiours, and laye in ambushe of eyther side the strete where th'erle should passe in his retorne to his lodgynge; who, with his brother, arme in arme, with some fyve or six of their pages and servantes, betwene ten and eleven of the clocke in the evenynge, came devysynge together till they were at the jaumbe, or torne, of a streete that stretcheth to Sainte Jacques; where, soddainly they sawe theym selves assailed and set uppon on all sides with men in armor. And findynge their force far to weake to mainteine skirmish with so greate a trowpe, armed at all pointes upp to the throate, and they onely the simple assistance of the rapior and cloke, began to flee. But they founde a stopp of passage in everye place; in suche sorte as th'erle and his brother, with the rest of their small crewe, were cutt in peces in one instant. Albeit, as morder is the synne moste detestable affore God, so we see fewe or none escape unpunyshed, nor any done in suche secret but the majestye of the higheste reserves a meane to discover it. For in the heate of this sharpe medley th'erle Ardizzyno espied the basterde Pierro, whome he named and called uppon manye tymes, but all in vaine. Whiche, beyng harde and advouched by one of the townesmen, standyng rather in his windowe to crye ayme, then helping any waye to parte the fraye, was the cause that he was taken the same nighte and committed to prison by th'authoritie of the Duke of Burbon, lieutenante and chyefe governour within Millan for th'emperour Charles the fifte. And the nexte daye, fearynge the offer of the racke or other tormentes, he confessed the facte, wyth the cause, to procede of the sinister subornation of the Countesse Blanche Marie, whose lyfe and trade, accordyng to the discourse you have alredy harde, he ymparted at large to the Duke and reste of the councell. She, beynge advertised of the whole, had tyme and libertie to flee; but God whyche is juste would not that her

No morder escapeth unpunished.

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wickednes shoulde bee assisted with anye longer date; seynge that if she had lived her malice woulde also have raged uppon th'erle Gaiazo, who by good chaunce was at that tyme out of the towne. The nexte daye shee was sente into an other prison in the towne, to avoyde conference betwene Dom Pierro and her. Whereof there was more cause of feare then needed; for that uppon the firste examination she confessed the whole conspiracie, trustynge, belyke, in I can not tell howe manye her thousande crownes, wherewith shee hoped to corrupte the governour or suche as bare authoritie under him. Wherin her expectation was no lesse frustrate then her destinies seamed wearie to favour her with longer lyfe—for the offer of her crownes was hatefull to the upryghte ministers of justice, and other meanes of medyacion hadde no place in the senate—for that she was judged to bee taken oute of prison the seconde daye after the morder, and loase her head in the place of publike execution. In the meane while, the capteines of the armye purchassed the lyfe of the bastarde of Cardono, and sente hym with divers letters of comendacion to th' emperour; who, for the respecte of hys experience and practis in warre, advaunced him to a charge conveniente for his skil.

And albeit the laste arreste and sentence diffinitive of the miserable countesse was communicated unto her to th'ende she mighte put her selfe in readines to passe the dreadfull journey of deathe, yet, seamynge to repose muche for herselfe in th'assistance of her coffers, she neyther dismayed at the newes nor disposed her selfe any waye toward God, untill the sergeantes criminall, taking her out of her dongeon in the castell, led her to the fatall theatrie in the market place, where was erected a faire skaffolde to playe the laste acte of her tragedye uppon. There the wretched ladye entred into open confession of her faltes and former lyfe in the hearyng of the multitude, desiring God upon her knees, wyth greate effusion of teares, not to deale with her according to her deserts, but that she mought enjoye the benefytt of his mercye; and that he woulde not argue agaynste her, for yf he judged her accordynge to her iniquities shee was

not hable to abyde it. And so, desyering the people to preferr their prayers on her behalf, for her better assistance of the spirit of grace in her perillous passage which she had to parforme, she renounsed nature by the deadly blow of the sword of execution, whiche toke awaye the head from the parnicious bodie of her, who in her life never founde any wickednes whyche shee dyd not onelye ymbrace but excede wyth ymitation and increase with further vylanye, nor was acquaynted with any vertue whyche she dyd not abuse or convert into an agravacion of synne. A goodlye example, suer, for the youth in oure tyme, seynge that the greatest parte, launsynge indifferentlye into the gulphe of all abominacion, are governed onelye by the transport of their vaine and foolysh conceits, without having respect to the sundry mischefes and impositions of shame which fayle not to attend the end of suche exercises. For yf the Lord of Cardonne hadde not bene rescowed by th'assistance of a good fortune, and taken out of the handes of distresse by speciall ayde of th'other captaynes, it may be easely judged what miserie had thundered upon him by gevinge himselfe in praye to the flatteringe appetit of a lighte and foolishe woman; who seamed to yelde him more glee or favor for the satisfieng of her owne lust and to performe her malicious devise then for any respect for loyaltye or true love, indiferent care of his honor, or honest regard to her owne estimation. And trewlye as hys misfortune is great that bestoweth his affection upon a whore—for that he is incident to a thousande inconveniences—so his folye is no lesse that perswades himselfe to be beloved of a common dorie; seinge their amytie continueth no longer then they reape eyther pleasure or profit, neyther are they so inconstant in love as voyde of measure in imaginacion of mischiefes. Wherin, for that our plentiful time yeldes us choyse of examples and sorte of familyar experience, I am content to abridge the justification at this tyme; for that to maintain continuall argument of morders, or affaires full of perill, is often hurtful to the quyet mynde, desiringe somtime a pleasant recreacion from affliction, no lesse then the pylot or weary mariner covets a present calme and appeasement of angry

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Eole, after they have bene longe forwearyed in contending against the malice of their fortune, amonge the perillous strayghts of th' unquiet occean.

And, albeit the corruption of our owne nature is so great that we take more delight to heare a discours or beadroll of folyes then in reportes enterlarded with admonicions full of reason and wysedom; yet am I perswaded that suche as have their mindes typped wyth vertue cannot be so pervars, nor voyde of good disposition, as the other wretches, whose lyves, bearynge the badge of infamie, makes theim also sequestrated from the reste of the good sort. Wherin, we ought to be fullye resolved that there is no historie (howe full of pleasant delyte so ever it appeare) which yeldes not with all wholsomme instructions to dyrecte oure lyves; neyther ought we to be so scrupulous or ful of curiositie as eyther to condemne or mislike the pleasaunt comodye for that it is not painted with the serenety of the Stoickes; seing the volumes of prophaned records, and scripture it self, do note unto us the lyves of sundre vicious parsons: not for that we shoulde enter into tearmes of grudge againste the reaport of suche auncient antiquitie, nor dispose our selves to the imitation of the like vices, but rather in vewynge the strange and grevous punishment whiche ordinarily hath overwhelmed suche sin, to learne and labor to directe our lyves by the contrary of their examples: whiche is one respecte that made me put my penne in exercise to prefer this historie to our vulgar tonge: to th' ende, also, that the frayle youth of our countrie, that folowe the damnable path of iniquitie, maye see howe sewer they are to feel the heavye hand of God, who blesseth the good sorte wyth a plenty-full gyft of his grace, and punisheth the wycked with sundrye sortes of affliction.

DISCOURSE VIII

JULYA DROWNETH herselfe, for that her bodye was abused by force.

GEFFRAIE FENTON'S

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THE ARGUMENT

We sholde not neede so muche th' assistance of foreine recordes, nor reporte of aunciente histories excedinge the compase of our age and memorie, if we were as carefull to note th' accydentes of our own time as we seame curious in admiracion of rare things, whose glorious antiquitie with parcialitie of fame settes a more price of th' indevor of others then their diligence and doings deserve by justice. Like as the Grekes and Romans, painting with an exquisite dexteritie of the pen their pollicy in warr, the valiantnes of their captaines, their wonderfull fortune and good successe in all enterprises, with other discourses of their vertues, do argue them more glorious in their owne acts then meritorious in deade of true commendacion; for that, in arrogatinge unto them selves the only title and name of all knowledge, they make our time seme naked of all vertue, savinge such as is derived from theim and ymputacion of their doings. Albeit, we maye object with the Spartayne agaynste th' Athenians, that those lippwise soldiours, or scoole orators, had a more facilitie in discovering, then facylitie in execucion of, noble effects. Not for that I meane to do such wrong to their estimacion as not to yelde to theim a title of singularitie in all perfections; yet I may also be bould to preferr the benefit of oure time; which, participating wyth their golden age in any respect of honest gift or qualitie, is hable to present a furniture of as many examples and authorities of vertue as we rede were founde in the politike state of Rome, when Cato, Camilla, or Scipio, governed that proude citye, or when one Pericles, Themistocles, or Aristides, bare authoritie in the florishing Acadimia of Athens. For if we go about to discourse of the valyantnes in armes, or stody to be pryvy to the sleightes and pollecy in warr, we nede not th' assistance of one Hannybal, discipline of Marius, pollecy of Pompeius, nor corage of Cesar

or Alexander, seing our fertile Europa brings furth such store of excellent captaines, that, if those great conquerours and subvertors of whole countries amongs the Grekes and Romains wer now in the feilde with their invincible force, they should not finde a Mettelus or Galoys without armes, nor encounter a company of effemynate Persyans, or have to do with ferfull Italyans, but they shold buckle wyth the valiant cavelery and gendarmy of Fraunce, fele the force of the courageous Englishmen, make a proofe of the puisance of the mightie Almaine, and make heade agaynst the armes of the loftie Spanyarde. Wherein, as the shortnes of time denieth me to yelde to everye captein and souldiour his peculyar commendacion, so my endevor could not escape without ymputacion of superfluitie, if I shold enterlard my catalogue of the gracious gifts of our tyme withe the due glorye of the fathers of justice, devising wonderful pollicyes and necessarye lawes for regarde of the publike weale in the senate; wherein our world I thinke oweth nothinge to antiquitie. Neyther neede I preferr the singularitie and exquisite skil of oure payntors, or forgers of curious ymages; whose arte at this daye contendes wythe the aunciente conninge of Appelles. Albeit, uppon the commendacions of these dexterities in armes and artes concerning the hands, I finde attendinge a worthie cause of generall complaynte agaynst the slowthfulnes of our tyme, gevinge wyth al the title of juste prayse to the diligence of th' auncyentes, who, preserving the memory of such as deserved renowme amongenst them for any vertue, hath left us cause to blush in our owne abuses, and be ashamed of the negligence we use in recording the rarietyes of our time, or perfections of suche as are justly meritorious of prayse. And, albeit of long time th' iniquitie of the bad sort of men have so much prevailed over the worthie renowne of vertuous women, that they have not sticked to whet their malicious tongues with diverse blasphemous reproches agaynst such as by misfortune have geven som false bownd to their honor, yet ought we not to be unthanckful to the chastetie and honest conversacion of the rest; who, rather then they wold departe wyth the badge of their pudycitie, have bene sene with their bodyes full of wounds, and faces died with blode, and sometime passed the panges of painfull death in resistinge the force and fleshely vylanye of the wicked corrupters of the virginitie. Wherin if the Grekes have geven such great comendacion to the faire Hippo, who, being made a pray, amongest other spoyles of the countrey,

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to a barbarous pirott, on the sea, with present daunger to depart wyth the badge of her honor, chused rather to bury her body in the belly of some fyshe, and consecrat her integrytie to the waves, then suffer an infydell pallyard to hurt her soule to the deathe, in depryvinge her of that which all the worlde are not able to restore or make good; if the Boecyans have not forgot to engrave in pillors of eternetye the memorye of a ladye in Thebes, who, forced to the vyolacion of her bodye by a rude souldiour of the Kynge of the Macedonions, dissimuled for the time her dystres wyth fayned showes that she delyted in the pleasure, til, encountringe at laste a convenient occasion, she revenged the wronge done to her honor with the death of him that had used such force agaynst her (where, also, herself, loathing the use of longer yeares, having already lost the onlye joye and felicitie in lyfe, gave place to nature, and at th' instanct made a blody sacryfice of herself by her own hands); and if the Romains have had alwayes in their mouthe the prayse of Lucrese, whose chastetie they have placed in the theatrye or circle of Mars, and geven her a chiefe place amonges the trains of the chast Diana: if all these, I say, have bene so thankfull to the vertuouse women of their time, that, by their diligence, the memorye of their vertue remaineth in recorde to the posteritie of all ages, what worthie cause of rebuke have we, who, lyvynge under a better clymat and constellacion, enjoying more pure lawes, and aspiringe nerer th' ymage or semblaunce of dyvynitie, will not expose the noble frutes of our tyme, whyche yeldes not onely example of semblable vertue to th' auncientes, but excedes them in contynent lyvinge and chast disposicion. Wherof we have an example of Yphygenne, doughter of the Kyng of Ethiopia; who, havyng already vowed her virginitie to the spouse of oure soules, accepted rather the offer of present deathe then to be joyned in mariage to a wanton younge prince (provyded for her by her father), with a nomber of lyke authorities which I colde infer to prove the sinceritie of women, who, at the beginning, when our religion was first founded, did lay the corner stone of puretie, without having the knowledge of man. Neyther is our age so voide of examples of contynency, nor the roote of vertue so cleane extirped from amongest us, but we may se at this day sundry pattorns of pudycitye in the persons of all degres of women, aswel noble as of meaner condicion, exceding the vertue of such as antiquitie hath in so great veneracion. Wherin, for a familiar revenge of our ladyes now

a dayes, touching the synyster ympositions of dyvers evil tongues inveighinge agaynst the whole sect, I have presented here upon the stage this historie, taken out of Italyon, whose authoritie as it is sufficient to answere the combate agaynste the wicked chalengors of the undefiled honor of the sacred sect femynyne, so the discourse is able to move compassion to the hartes of men participating with nobilitie, and set abroach the conduites of teares in the eyes of such ladyes and gentlewomen as take more pleasure to preserve in entyer the jewel of their honor then to open their eares to the charme of the vaine lover, passioned as he fayneth for a bewtye that passeth with the morning dewe; importinge also more cause of admiracion, as the person (in whom th' accident is veryfied) is of simple estate; for that the higher she is in degre the more care ought she to have of her honor exposing arguments and effects of vertu to the meaner sort, lyke as the torch, or Hemispher starr, geveth lyght to the lytle candel and element of lesse substance. I wishe the young ladies and damesells of our countrye would painte this table in their harts; and, with the vertue and ymytacion of her chastity, fortefye them selves agaynst the pepred allurements of the crafty fouler who makes warr against their honor, under th' ensigne of the blind captein Cupid and directed by the guide of folly; and not by example of her deathe to force an untimely and unnaturall destynie or end of their dayes.

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YT nede not seme doubtfull to anye at this day that Gazolo is percel of the dukedom of Mantua, planted in a most pleasant soile, right over agaynst the father of floddes, sometime called Iryden, and nowe beringe the name of Po; whose sundry brookes, devided into diverse streames and pleasant chanells, norisheth by their moistures the whole contrey of Italy. Like as also it is of no lesse credite, that wythin our time and memorie ther was borne and bred upp in the same towne a mayde called Julya, whome, if fortune had preferred to the title of a princes

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or greate ladye, whereby her vertues mighte have bene brought in reputacion by authoritie of high estate, like as her godly order and chast conversacion of lyfe made her name famous, she might have served (no doubt) as the only lanterne to geve lyght to al degres of youthe in our age. Her father was not made of so meane a molde for hys birthe as attended upon with continuall poverty, havinge only for his porcion the assistance and travaile of his hands to susteine himself and famylie. Wherein, albeit necessitie (being the most grevouse scourge of mans lyfe) pincheth commonly so extremelie that she makes us manye tymes forget both honor, honestie, and good order, ye and abuse the goodnes of our nature, yet shall you fynde some so whollie resolved in vertue, and stand so sewerly upon the guarde of their honest name, that, rather then the hungry rage of povertie or gnawing worme of necessitie have power to induse them to do the thing that their honor and honestie cannot justify, they wil not stick to resigne the hard and extreme condicion of their state into the hands of the miserable world by som glorious death, whych is the only and chief repose of misery, and undoubted consolacion of such as are alwayes persecuted with the malice of adversitie. Wherof you may note a famyliar proofe in the sequele of this Julya, who (notwithstanding the povertie of her parentes) had won by her owne industrie such a general commendacion of good government and chaste conversacion of lyfe, that, excedinge therin all the rest that were but her matches in equalitie of birthe and callinge, she brought also a decoracion of state and encrease of glory to the obscure name and pettegre of her poore auncestors. Neither was shee of lesse fame for the prayse of her bewtie and semely shape of body; wherin nature semed to advance her wyth such assistance of her comming that she appered, amongest the rest of her companions, as the glorious rose in the fragrant and pleasante morning of May. She had, also, such a speciall gyfte and order in spekinge, with a staied countenance duringe her conference with any, together wyth a wonderful grace in geving to everye one the due reverence of his callinge, that, notwythstandynge the simplicitie of her house, wyth the

small assistance of discrecion, not yet confirmed wyth the nomber of xvi yeres, her womanly and wyse order mighte serve to instruct some ladyes of highe callynge, and make blushe a nomber of greate dames that accompte theymselves withoute comparison, in dyverse courtes in Italy and els where. Albeit as all these vertues and rare gyftes served rather to encrease her prayse and commendacion among the people then anye suer meane to supplye the povertie of her parentes, or releve the hardenes of her owne state, soo her father forgate not to imploye her in the trade of honeste toyle, and teache her to treade the steppes of hys travayle; sometyme framynge her to the use of the wede hooke, to torne upp the earthe wythe a spade in the gardeine, and, as occasion served, to taste nowe and then of the husbandman's toile in attendynge the ploughe, wyth other exercises of payne alwayes incidente to the poore man as hys only porcion to defende hym frome the violence of hunger and extreme myserye: whych two harde enemyes, wyth the severe diligence of the father, seamed so whollye to pursue thys younglinge that ther was no exercise of profite or honest travaile of the hand wherein shee dyd not excede or do as wel as the best; being withall soo wholly resolved to prevente the malice of fortune, with the sweate of her brows, that she was not sene to suffer the least momente of tyme to passe wythout the dispatch of some honest labor; perswading herselfe that, as ydlenes is ryghtlye termed the roote of sin and mother of mischief, and special ennemye to seduce and corrupt the chastitie of women, so she is chieflye to be wythstanded wyth the armor of honest indevor, beinge denied to invade the hartes of such as kepe their bodyes accompanied wyth contynual travayle; neither doth that detestable vice expose other frutes then fylthye ymagynacions and conceytes of mischiefe, according to th' auctorytie of Plato, who affirmeth that in doynge nothyng men lerne to do evill. Wherein he is justefied, also, by dyverse textes of the Scriptures, willinge us not to be ydle, leaste wee fall into the daunger of the temptor. Whyche Salomon in lyke sorte dothe advowe, saynge the devyll is alwayes in ambushe to enter in them whose harts he fyndes occupied with vayne

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Ydlenes the mother of mischiefe.

In doing nothinge men learne to do evill.

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thoughtes and their bodyes absteyning from honeste labor. And trulye methinkes the true Christian can not stand too sewerlye uppon hys guarde in avoydynge the penaltyes of ydlenes, seyng the terrible threates of the Gospel, somonynge us, by the very wordes of our Savioure, to render accompte afore the throne of the highest of every ydle worde and worke we ymagyn or doo during oure aboade in thys transitorye vale. Whereof thys faire Mantua, fearinge no lesse to fall into the daunger of that evill then careful to prevent all occasions of the same, wold not admit any dispense or abstinence of travaile, savynge of the hollydaies, which she used as seasons of honest recreacion in the open feldes amongest other her compagnions, detestyng unlauful haunts, and secret chattinge with men in corners, the chefest meane to bryng their name and doynge in question. For she that abandoneth the companye of her companions, forsakinge the place of publike assembly to retire into the desolate and darke corners of the chamber, doth not only bryng her doyngs in doute, but also settes the sclanderer of worke to forge a thousand informacions against her former title and name of honestie, howe clere and strong so ever it seamed in the judgment of all the world. And what other opinion ys to be had of her that delites in secret conference, hatyng to have her sayngs procede in publike, then that shee treates of other affayers then she may wel justifie? For if she lived as she ought, and used none other tearmes then were to be advouched, she neade neither feare the creaking of the dore, nor use obscure and darke vaultes as only witnesses of her talke. Wherof I could enlarg the proff with authoritie of antiquitie, yf the misery of our present time did not prefer example sufficient; which I wish may so instructe the careles mothers of England, that, keping their doughters within the awe of correction, they make them also subjecte to the lawe and order of good governement, least both the one and the other becom the wonder of the multitude and cause of folysh enterluds devised on publicke stage by the like occasions. But now to our Julya, whose chast and upright order of lyving being yet fresh within the memorie of our age, and not to be defaced with the lengthe of tyme, serves, also, as a line to

lead you yong ladies to direct your lives (as nere as you can) by the dyall of her vertues. For she, treading thus both the stepps of honest traveile, and traded in the path of true perfection of life, devided the weeke into dailie exercises of toile and necessary affayers of her father, spending the holy dayes only in honest recreacion amonge semely companie in the churche yarde, or other convenient place of plublicke assemblie; wher, being unhappely spied of a detestable palliard and common enemy of the honor of women, was sodenly sommoned by the sentence of her destines, and fell by no lesse misfortune into the danger of a fleshly lover. For, at the same instant, the noble Loys Gonsaga, then byshop of the douchy of Mantua, kept his residence at Gazolo; where, amongest hys traine of houshold gentlemen, ther was one who, servyng the byshop in the office of a vallet of his chamber, hadd bene no lesse worthye of the credite of that rowmthe then of greter preferment at the hands of his maister, if he had not byn unhappely encountered by the desaster which this history presents unto you. But what a small spot staines a faier garment, and one vice that is detestable darkneth the credit of a nomber of vertues.

It is to be noted (as I have said) that in Italye the meeting of youth, and daunsing, is tollerable, so it be in the viewe and eye of the people. But, whatsoever other men do thincke of the art of daunsing, I am perswaded that it is rather a discipline devised within the scoole of Sathan, then an exercyse mete to encourage youth to th'imitacion of vertue. Wherin I appeale, to justifie my opinion, to the frute and effectes appearing daily in that lascivius trade. And, leving a parte the invectives and infinite examples which the histories on both partes do infer in detestacion of that wanton allurment or provocation to sin, I thought it sufficient to confirme my advise only with the authoritie of the Romaine, who, diswading al men from the exercise of daunsing, saith that the countenaunce, gestes, and other behavyors, of a daunser, do nothinge differ from the order and disposicion of a foole. Here this valet of chaumber to the byshop, being unhappelie present in an assembly of youth, espied by the like misfortune the order and behavior of Julia; who, albeit she

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was the porest of the companie, yet was she nothinge inferior to the best in semely grace and womanly order appearing in her during the time of the daunce; which, infectyng alredy the eies of the galland of Ferrara, moved him also with present desier to go nere and take a better view of her beautie, which he was not hable to consider with such judgment and assured stay of himself but the glymering complexion of her face, dyed with a natural coolor of white and red, made suche a breache into his harte, that, wearing the picture of her beautie in the botome of the same, proclaimed her, without further advise, the soveraygne lady of hys lyfe, and only mysters and ruler of hys thoughtes; and advowing herewith to yeald her the whole honor of his service, protested in secrett to himselfe, with lyke vowe and ceremonye of vayne conceyte, not to leve the pursute of suche a praye till he had made a conquest of that he ymagined, and encountred th' effect of his desyre by wearyng the garland of the flower and firste frutes of the maidenhedd of Julya; whom, because he stode on thornes til he had presented the firste ernest penie of his service, he requested too daunce; whyche, not knowynge the cause of hys courtesye, she refused not to doe, as one no lesse redy too performe all requests and affayres of cyvilitie and good bringing up, accordynge to her callynge, then excellyng all the reste of her tyme in beautie and other vertues without exception. But, yf this fonde younglynge and pupill of Cupido dyd feele afore the symple mocions of love beginnyng too tickle him but with desyre onelye to vewe her at large, yt is nowe that he resygned hymselfe wholy into the daunger of hym who, as a subtill serpent, lyeth in wayte to invade them whome he fyndes unarmed with vertue, laughynge afterwarde to hym selfe at oure redynes to lysten to the lure of hys bayte, and ronne hedlonge into the laborynthe of endles dysquyet. And that whyche brought more oyle to hys matche, and kyndled in hys harte the present sparkes of hoat affection, was when he felt the tendernes of her hande; whiche, albeit was every daye dipped in dyvers unholsom confections, and alwayes bare t'abide the violence of the wether, not refrayninge the hardnes or hard labor of any toyle, reteyned suche a dilicate softnes and

Love.

naturall hewe of it selfe that it seamed equall (for the fynes and smothnes of skyn) to some ladyes', which, I know, are assisted with the helpe of waters, and lee made for the nonce, and other legerdemeins devised by the potticarye to preserve their handes in a continual moysture, with a fyne whyte and pleasant show. The plesant reflection of her ladylike hand, which durynge the daunce he fayled not to graspe as often as he durste, gave suche encrese to the warre alredy begon, renewinge the combate of his thoughtes with suche fresh supplies of affection, that he founde himselfe so much to weake to menteine warr with one of the gretest lordes of the world, that, geving place to his present fortune, he resigned the fortresse of his former quiet, and became prisoner to him who wolde not be content with any other ransome then the losse of his libertie duringe his plesure. And, albeit the poore gentleman (felinge to great an extremytie in this firste passion) woulde gladly have resigned his preferment, and not pursewed the sequele or folowe the chase; yet, whether it were the smale experience he had in the skole of love, or the angrye dome of hys destinies that wolde not dismisse him without the rewarde of his follie, or whether the foggy myste of founde affection hadd so seeled the eyes of his mynde that he sawe hymselfe denied the assistance of any meane to redeme him from the yoke of his newe bondage, or what yt was, the sequele of hys yll fortune maye argue sufficiently hys follie. But wel I know that, for a disease of so straunge disposicion, he lacked his necessarye medycine, beyng no lesse deceyved in the credite of his owne wytt, in sekynge to quenche and mortifie the fyre alredy burst out into flame, by gevinge skope to hys eye to feede contynually uppon her whom he knowes to bee the cause of his grefe: neyther dyd he other good to himselfe then caste water upon hoat coales, doblinge the rage of hys affection by the desire he had to be contynually in her companye. He ought rather to have abandoned the place with the presence of his enemye at the very first alaram and offer of th'assault, dismissinge the remembrance of her beautie affore it made any breach in his harte; for he that is unhappely fallen into the danger of love must not kepe war with the remembrance of her that

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hath enchaunted him, nor pursewe the viewe of her beautye with a continuall gaze or regard of his eye, but rather, eschewinge the place and presence of his mystris (two common enemies to his quiet) seke to subdue the rage of his passion with longe absence and far distance of his aboad. Wherin he muste seme so precise to cure so strange a disease, that, yf unhappely he come within the aier of the place wher she is, he stand so suerly upon his guarde, that she once glaunce not upon him with a glimeryng sommonce of her flatteringe eye; considerynge that in the verey eye and looke of a woman doth lurke an infection of suche drawyng vertue, that one simple object or glance of the same, being sufficient to pearce thorowe the armour of his resistance, is also hable to bringe him eftesones under the yoke of her awe. But this foolish Ferrarois, rather resolved in his evil and contented with his choise, then desierous to retire in time, or hable (as it semed) to shonne the peril of the losse of his libertye, gave place to his present fortune and entred the listes as thrall or captive to the beauty of Julya; with whom, after th' end of ij or iij daunces, he began to devise and discourse of love in this sorte:—'Yf the record of diverse histories of old time, together with the present viewe of sondry familiar examples at this daie, did not so amply describe the power of love, and partly instructe me touching his order and disposition, I sholde seme no lesse amased at the mistery of his traunce then I feele myselfe unhappely encountred with the messenger of his behest. And justely (me thincke) may we commence complaint against nature, who, framing us of a brickel and delicat mettall, made us rather incident and apte to incur every danger of the fleshe and peril of temptacion then armed us with choise of meanes to resiste the ordinary assaultes of the world. Wherof' (saieth he) 'I may exclaime wyth good aucthoritie above the reste, seinge that, since the viewe of your presence in this place, I am fallen into the prooffe of the like perill. For as I have hetherto enjoyed the benefit of a moste pleasant libertye, beinge no lesse free from all assaults of fond affection then voide to desier to commend my service to the best lady of them all; so, synce my gredye and unhappye eyes seased with suche assurance

The gentleman maketh love to Julya.

upon your beautye, takynge, with large viewe, the ful measure of al your parts and making present report therof to my hart and other the inward parts of me, I have susteined suche hoate alarams betwene my libertie and desyer to do you service, that, beinge no lenger hable to restore the feighte for want of fresh supplies, am here comme under your lee presenting myselfe the prisoner of your beautie. Wherin, albeit I can not by any merite of mine owne crave an expedicion of favour by justice, yet do I not despaier that you will suspend my delivery, seing my passion is of no lesse importance then either th' abridgement or prolonging of my lif, persuading myself with this special comfort, that, under the vaile of so rare a beautie, ther can not lurke any disposicion of long crueltie.' But she, destesting no less his pepered persuacions then loathinge to spend longe time in so vaine an argument, replied no lesse wyselye then with tearmes of vertue, measuring her answer with the shortnes of tyme she ment to devise wyth him. 'It is hard, syr' (saith she) 'to judge a difference betwene your unsemelye discurtesye and the arguement of your present follye, seinge both the one and the other importe a semblable meaning of dishonestye, neyther are they bothe voide of equall reproche to your owne estimacion. And, albeit your indevor in suche affaires ought not be answered but with termes of publike exclamacion, to th' end the office of infamous sklanders might ycalde you the worthie rewarde of youre travaile, yet, because the punishement of shame for this one offence shall not take awaye the hope of amendement and future grace in you, I am content to make counsell of the faulte, and dismiss you wyth free forgevenes of the facte. Wherin, as the remembraunce of your example shall hensfurth warne me to take hede to the subtyll charmes of other not dyfferynge from you in disposition, so let it suffice you that I make scilence of your offence, without other rebuke to so great a disorder; wyth this further request, that this gentill repulse may rather importe a credit to my vertue than provoke you eftesones to geve the lyke charge of mine honour, whiche I hold no lesse dere then the greatest ladye of our countrey. Neyther shall you fynde my chastetye lesse pure then my

Julya answereth.

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povertye vertuouse.' Whiche, albeit made the galland somewhat amased for the tyme, yet as a valyant souldyor that will not leve the assaulte for one repulse gave a seconde charge wyth these tearmes:—'Yf you seame in this sorte to prononce the sentence of my death' (saith he) 'and suffer your crueltie to commit me to the handes of fatall execucion, the worlde wil note you a monster and enemy to nature, and God sewer wil cal for a reackonning of so foule and cruel an acte.' 'The malice of the worlde' (saith she) 'is not so greate nor parciall in this respecte as to yelde me infamy in defendynge mine honour; and nature is abused when we lose so precious a gyfte. And, touchinge any accompte to make afore God, I thinncke my soule shall stande in more daunger in condescendyng to your request then yf you wylfullye dye by your owne follye. Wherefore I advise you, for ende, to gyve over the pursute of so vaine an enterprise, and seeke to bestowe your travaile wher ther is hope of better successe, and amongest suche as, makyng a common marchandise of their honour, will not stick to set it of sale to suche as bid most for it. For my part, I am no lesse jelouse of myne honesty then carefull to kepe in entyer the name of my poore parentes. Neyther shall mine honour be sould for other valewe then the price of my lyfe.' Whiche laste wordes albeit argued to the gentleman a greate unlikelihood to come to the effecte of his desire, wyth no less impossibilitie to shake the fortresse of her chastetye, or make a breache into a castell of so valyaunt defence, yet woulde not he, for all that, geve place to dispare, but, retyryng to th' assistance of a newe devise, he learned the common haunte of his mystris goinge and comming from the feelde, as occasion of her busines did cal her; wher he, meting her more often then he was welcome, forgott not eftesones to commend unto her the remembrance of his cause, with a redresse of his grefe, hoping with the helpe of his importunitie and assistaunce of tyme to remove the stone from her stomake, and procure a pleasant thawe to the frozen harte of this pore cotier. Wherin he gayned no lesse then if he had spent so much time in nombring the smal sands that covers the deserts of Arabia: in so much that she

willed him, nowe for all, to rest contented with that he had don and presse her no further. 'For' (saith she) 'so longe as my soule and body shall kepe house together, I will make suche a jewel of myne honour that there shal never frivolous lover have interest or authoritie to dispose of it. Neither wil I geve so large a skoape or libertie to my unruly affections as the precious flower of my chastetye shalbe a praye, or at the disposition of any but such as it shall please th'almightie to joyne with me in mariage. Wherfore, go open the packe of your tromperie in a market convenient for your purpose, and consider your callynge, wyth the profession of your maister, who ought to traine you in such sorte as you may rather appeare true patterns and ymages of vertue then ministers of knavery, sekyng to seduce poore maides of the contrey, who, lyvynge in the feare of God, with no lesse care of their honest name, ought not to listen to the lure of love, or kepe vayne chat with companions lyke to your selfe, but, folowyng the discipline of vertue to susteine oure honest povertye wyth the travaile of oure handes, whiche is the porcion appointed to us by Him, whome I beseche to mortifie this rage of your follye that hereafter I may live in peace, and se you restored to the use of your former sences.' But he, being none other then the slave of follye, disposed whollye to feede upon the humour of his affections, had no other thought then to devise howe to enjoye the firste frutes and pleasant jewiste of the virginity of chaste Julya, who, the lesse accompte she seamed to make of his greef, the greater grewe his desir to pursue her: whiche he failed not still to performe with more vehemencie then afore, publishyng his affection by the sounde of a nomber of doleful sighes, accompanied wyth teares of suche pitiful regarde that they seamed sufficient to pearce a hart wroughte on the forge of flinte or steele.

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God.

But who is hable to corrupt the chastetie of her that hath her harte armed with assurance in vertue? Or what is he that, eyther with the smoth stile of his pleasant tounge, or suttletye in sleintes and fine devises, or other legerdemeins of folly, can make so strong a charme to enchaunt the constancie of a woman resolved in the feare of God, with desire

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to were a crown of ymortalitie by the renowme of her honest lyfe? But it is to be resisted by a speciall confidence in God and assurance in her vertu. The pure and holly virgins in time past, whose names be registred in the booke of fame, have not they byn strongly assailet wyth semblable assaltes; and yet, wythout shott or shed of blodde, they have prevailed above the malice of theym that undertoke to rob them of the everlasting glory of their virginitie? And suerly there is no malyce of man so great, nor devise so detestable, that stands not in awe and stowpes in the presence of true vertue; neyther can it pearce, and much lesse possesse, any hart but that which he fyndes unarmed of a faithe and fere in God, who wil neyther suffer his servant to be tempted above his power, nor see him oppressed long with the malice of the wicked. Here may the slaunderer have wherwith to stop his mouth and be brought to beleve, by famyliar proofe, that vertuouse women have better meanes to resist the veine importunities of love then the wicked and evil disposed have reason to seke to seduce the honor of their chastitie. And if, by destenye or ill fortune, it happen that some one forgot her selfe so far that she falls unhappely into the daunger of the temptor, let her falte and shame be peculiar to herselfe and not staine the reste wyth the reproche of her follye. For it is no reason that when any thinge chaunceth amys, all menne become giltie of the falte; no more then when one man, among a nomber incident to the like desaster, becoms a thefe or the worker of some other haynous offence, ought to infect other with th'infamy due to him selfe, or ympart the penance of the fact amongest other that himselfe only deserveth. For nature, makynge us all of one mettell, hathe geven us indiffrently a semblable perfection, wyth speciall decree that every man shoulde be noted and judged as he is; wyllynge wythall that if any of her creatures do unhappely declyne, that he alone bere the reproche of his owne facte, and not admit it for a consequent that the whole nomber shoulde be spotted with th'imperfection of one. Besides in the beginning, when syn seased first uppon man, albeit it is to be supposed that it toke like possession of the woman, being

made his companion and associated unto him by the will of God, yet have we no reason or meane to persuade that they are eyther inferior in vertue, or more apte to fall then we: neyther ought we do them that wronge in estemynge them lesse weake then our selves, or more subject to syn then the moste and beste assured of us all, seinge we fynde them longer in breath, and use more assurance in withstandynge the sensuall provocations of the fleshe, then we have reason to assaulte them with the like alarams. And truly he geves more argument of his fragilitie and weake resistaunce, who, at the firste assaulte and mocion of his wanton affections, doth yelde himselfe prisoner to th'appetit of his will, with intent to pursue th'end of his lascivious desire, then she that, resisting of long time the hoat alarams of his vehement requests, is dryven at laste, unwillyngly, to resigne the keys of her fortresse; more, peradventure, to prevent the danger of dispaier in hym whome she seeth redye to die for her sake then for anye desire to content th'appetite of her owne will. And yet can not she escape the malice of suspicion, nor merite the name of perfet constancie, that is overcome with any enchantement, howe strong so ever it be, for that she can not beare the title of true vertue onles shee remaine invincible to th'ende, waighing her honor and lyfe in indifferent balaunce. Wherof al ladies may behold a familiar prof in this mirror and jemme of constancy, Julya; who, the more shee was pressed and courted with the pepered alurements of the valiant souldior of love, the more did she rampire her selfe in assurance of vertue, seaming valiant in the defence of a fort that was inexpugnable: whiche, ministrynge nothynge but a present dispaier to him to prevalle by any pollicyes afore devised, drive him to resorte to th'assistance of the pernicious and common meane used ordinarily by the detestable palliard that can not otherwaies deceive the simplicitie of honest maides, and whiche, as an infection worse then the ayr of the pestilence, doth corrupte the greenes of youth afore it be confirmed wyth experience and discrecion—I meane a she bawde (wherof Paris hath lesse wante then choise or store of honest women) which, coyffed with a visor or cloke of fained hollynes, and masqued wholy

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with a mofler of *hypocricy*, seaming to the worlde to mortifye her bodye with iij or iiij solemne fastes in the weke, watchinge in devoute maner at the churche doare for the devocion and almes of the people, and carynge in her hande a baudy baskett, rather to coolor her villanye then to serve her necessarye tourne, becoms the collcaryour betwene the lover and his trol, makyng a matche no lesse odyous in the eye of the worlde then detestable afore the throne of the highest, becominge by this meanes the fyrst seducer of them that, afore the offer of her charmes of painted allurement, were peradventure no lesse voyde of suche ymaginacion then free from intent ever to commit so foule an acte; and yet use they suche secret sleight in the conveighe of their busines, that the finest wittes can hardely espye them, and the best eies had neede of spectacles to discover their trade. But what is it that love can not fynde out; whose eies, albeit, be so percyng of them selves that they will penetrat, and fynd a whole to peepe out of, the strongest and closest tower in a countreye, yet hath his arte suche a gyfte of revelacion in this case that ther is no meane, howe secret so ever it be, but he geves informacion of it to him that traffiques in his affaires, wyth intent to advaunce th' effect of his desier? Wherin this vallett of chamber, forgetting neither rule nor instruction, gat him in hast to this double dorye and solemne *hypocryte*, whom he knewe to be an ordinarye solycitour in the lyke affaires, and a redye phisicion to cure all diseases of his importance. He first conjures her in anye wyse to make councell of that whiche he ment to communicate unto her, and then to assiste his greefe wyth the uttermost of her diligence. Wherwith she seinge even nowe as farr into his disease as his phisicion did into his urine, castyng alredye in her head what marke the poore lover woulde shoot at, began to prefer a certen difficultye to promise eyther the on or the other, alledging that if his request shoulde tende to the hurte or disadvantage of her conscience his labor were lost any furthur to pursue the assistaunce of her god will. 'For,' saith she, 'I had rather dye wyth the note of honest name, whiche hetherto I have kepte, then, upon the ende of my yeres, do the thynge with

my bodye that in the other worlde might bryng my soule in hazarde of grace afore him whome it behoves me not to offende.' But the subtill lover, who knewe wel inough that her trade consisted in the conveighe of bawdye errandes, and that the body and soules of suche filthes were no lesse subjecte to corrupcion then their hypocrisye and vaile of hollynes detestable, brake with her in fewe wordes of the cause of his comming, desyryng her in any wyse not to dissemble her indevour on his behalf; addinge for a further circomstaunce that she shoulde reape a thankefull rewarde of her travaile. Wherin, because he knewe that money was the nexte meane and only key to open the devout harte of this monster, and that such she-apes and goolphes of iniquitye have no other God but the geine of their abhominable trade, let fal into her lapp some iij or iiij duckets; whose first vewe prevailed so much, and had such power to convert this painted image, that, wythout further entreatie, she removed the vaile of her fyrst hardnes and advowed her selfe the handmaide of his behest; wyllynge hym to lyve in hope, and repose him selfe wholly uppon her diligence. 'Wherof,' saieth she, 'I doubt not to present the suche spedie effecte, as within fewe daies the joye that thou shalt feele, by the encounter of thy desyre, shall farr excede the languishing greefe of thy presente passion. And thus muche I will promise the further, that if she be but a woman, and nott possessed with any parte of a devill (as many of us be) I wil so conjure her withe charmes and enchantmentes of my arte, that, of her selfe, she shal offer thee the possession of that which heretofore thow couldest never wyn by power or pollicy. But, take head my sonne,' saith she, 'that this be mom, and my indevor not discovered to any, for as pytty, more then other respecte, hathe moved me to undertake thus muche for thy contentacion, beyng the firste that ever brought me to practyse so badde a trade, so I wold not, for the price of all I have, that the world shoulde understande I were a broaker in a busynes so farr unmete for myne honor and age.' 'Tushe!' sayeth this fondlyng and cockney of Ferrara, 'let not the feare of that be any ympediment to your diligence; for I am no lesse carefull of your reputacion

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The dowtefull mynde is never in quiett.

then desirous to see th'effecte of your promise. Wherein, I praye you, forgett not to make expedicion your chefest mynister, remembryng, with al, that the dowtfull mynd ys never in quiet, and the desiring hart lives alwayes in expectacion; protesting unto you eftesones, in the woorde of a gentleman, that, if your travaile put me in possession of my praye, I shall not be so gladd to enjoye the virgynytie of my deare Julia, as redy to requite your indevor, in suche sorte as the rewarde of your travail herein shalbe a relefe to you and yours so longe as you live.' 'Well! well!' sayeth this olde hagg, 'I will tryc your curtesie, and your selfe shalbe witnes of my diligence, wyshing you no lesse willing to performe but the one halfe of your liberall offer then I dout not to deserve yt with spede. For, yf ever one woman had power to overcome an other, I make my accompte that she shall not escape my handes till I have taught her suche a daunce as shee never learned in her lyfe.' Wherewith, she dismissed that seely foole of Ferara, quarelling with his unquiet thoughtes, and yet in some hope to be holpen by th'assistance of hys old *Darioletta* and broker of bawdry; and shee repayred ymediatly to her charge, and watching her time to execute the same. Wherin she was furthered by a helpe of Fortune; who favored this enterprice so muche, that the poore paysant and his wife being one daye abrod at their labor, Julya alone was left at home; with whome this lewde messenger, after a few familiar gretinges, powdred ful of sophisticall hollynes and cursed hypocrisy, began to parle in this sorte:—'I mervaile, my girle, to se thee so forgetful of thy selfe, in abusing so much the precious gyfte of nature and greenes of thy pleasaunt youth, that, neither respectinge the dewe meritt of the one nor the other, and lesse worthie to enjoye the worst of them both, thou hast gotten of late the title of proude and cruel. Doste not thou knowe that the greatest praise to be geven to a maide of thy age and calling consists and commes chefly by her curteous behaviour to every man; and that, of the contrary parte, she is pointed at of the world, that, seminge to stand altogether uppon her slippers, rejectes the honest offers of curtesie and frindshipp, arguing by that

The bawde to Julya.

meanes her haggard and rude disposicion? Wherin, as the chefest point of commendacion of us women depends upon certein tearmes of curtesie and showes of frendship, so are we chefly bounde to make declaracion of the same on the behalfe of them that seme to honor us with semblable profession, beinge bounde therunto by the vertue of their former merits, and the leste we can do is to requite them with the like affection. God hath not created us under the clymat or constellacion of Mars, nor made us to be ministers of crueltie, neither hath he given us the harte of a lyon or disposicion of a tyger, but framed us of a mettall more tractable; which appeares rightly in th'intisinge counte-naunce of thy flattering face, arguing withal, that under the vaile of such shinynge beautye, ther can not be shrouded a harte of revenge or disposition of crueltie. And as the drawynge regardes of your eyes, glauncynge upon a man with no lesse force then the hot reflection of the sonne, persynge eche thinge uppon earth subject to his heat, doth make him strike saile, and seke to be guided by the glymerynge lighte of suche twinkling starres, forcing him withall to pursue your favour with the franke offer of his humble service; so you are not only bounde to appeare reciprocal in affection, but also yelde them the dewe mede of so greate a martyrdome, deryved of causes in yourselfe, and not refuse to be courted wyth younge men, or mislike their indevour in sekynge to wyn by their service the glory of that whiche the sommonce of your eyes doth halfe promise them. Wherein, althoughe they are partly guided and stirred by nature, yet are they chiefly allured and set on fyer by the influence of your beautye. Our age, beside, is not void of experience howe divers maides, beinge honored with theyr service and affection of sundry gentlemen of no small accompte, have semed rather rashely to refuse the profer of suche frindshypp then rightly wayghe the meryt of theyr curtesye; and after receyvynge the due sentence of theyr crueltye, have not onely doated upon such as toke pleasure in theyr greefe, and laughed at theyr follye, but also deserved not (for any gyfte that was in them) to receive the favour of one simple regarde of the eye. Whiche, as it is to be noted

Women ought to be curteus by nature.

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to procede of the just vengeance of that God who first stirres in us the mocions of suche frindshipp, so are we warned (in embracynge the contrary) to eschewe the perill of semblable accidents. And so, for your parte, beinge no lesse fortunat then the best of any age heretofore, and honored with no lesse true affection then duetyful service of one that is redye to pawne hys lyvynge, honor, and all that he hath, for the interest of your good wyll, I mervaile you regard so lyghtlye the rewarde of so greate a vertue, and use so small care in curyng your owne disease, which, because you dare not declare, doth make a secrett martirdome of your florishyng youth. Albeit, for ende, yf you wyll willynglye embrace the gyfte of present tyme, and use mine advise in the pursuete of your pleasure and commodytye, I doubte not within lesse then a moment to restore you to treble contentement of mynde, relyve the nedeful povertye of your parents, and make you excede the reste of your neyghbours in authoritye and estimation.' But Julia, no lesse gladd to here an ende of this pernicious oracion, then lothing by good right th' imbassing of the detestable and cursed Marmotte—whiche she coulde not conceile, in suche sorte but the argument of collour in her face—bewrayd the just anger of her mynd, and replyed unto her in this sorte:—'I see' (quod she) 'the world is no lesse wicked of it selfe then the waye harde to discerne the disposicion of every people. Neyther can a man be knowen by his shadow; and easyer it is to fall into the danger of the evil then to finde a true paterne of vertue. Neyther ys pure gold knowen by his glysterynge coollour, nor that religion perfect that smells of supersticion, exposynge frutes of execrable corrupcion and sensuall conspiracies. Ys this the good councell you geve to the youth of Gazolo? Is this the example of vertue or instruction of honestie whiche is to be expected in the nomber of your yeres? Have you thus longe blayred the eyes of the worlde with a masque of fained hollynes, and now retires to the vomett of your hipocrisie, with entente to seduce her who ys no lesse assured in vertue then you unworthie to enjoye the benefyt of life in abusyng your dewtie towarde God, and deceyving the opinnyon and

expectacion of all men? Albeit my povertie be great, and my parents of lesse habilitie to releve me, yet hath God so endowed me with the gyfte of thanckfull contentacion that my estate, with contynuall use of honest travaile, ys no lesse plesaunt to me then the dilicate order, ful of superfluite of vaine pompe, used by great ladyes now a dayes, wantonlye norished in pallays and places of princes; beynge more redy to ronne under the danger of a thowsand torments, yeldyng death hys tribute with the sacrifyce of my bodye, then to laye my chastitie in pawne (as you perswade me) for th' inlarging the hard condicion of my selfe or state of my poore parents. Neither have I hetherto felt any mocion of that follie which you call love, and muche lesse meane I to make any experience of his flatteryng offers, howe great so ever they appere. Wherfor, let yt suffice you to have broached the vessel of your villanie afore her that, in respecte of your yeres, is contented to comytt your filthye message to scilence; wyshyng you hensfurth to broake in matters of more honestie, or at the least to seke to solicit such as are as careles of theyr honour as you redy to seduce it. For my part, I have weighed min honour and lyfe in indifferent ballaunces, with intent to exchange both the on and the other at equall price; and as for the galland that sent you, he makes true declaration of the love he beares me, in semyng more desyerous to enjoye the pleasure of my bodye then carefull to preserve myne honour or prevent the daunger of my soule. And you as the unnatural *bourreau*, suborned to subvert the chefest ornament of my life, are content to become his messenger and minister, and, under the coollor of devocion, to communicate matters of bawdry, so, for his part, let him kepe that he hath won, and pay hym selfe with the tribut of his own folly, for I am not only resolved hensfurth once to speke to hym, but also to shonne the place wher he is, as a venemous serpent and ravenous wolfe, rather desyerous to make marchandise of my body then careful any waye of my reputacion; wishyng you also for ende to depart the place, least your long taryeng yelde you the due rewarde of your travaile.' Whiche sharpe repulse and last threates so amased the bawde and nipped her in the head, that although she

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wer more excellent in the gyfts of an oratour then belonged to one of her trade, yet durste she neyther truste the smoth and sugred stile of her tounge in excusinge the cause of her comming, nor seme eftesones to credite the fynes of her wytt in devisyng newe charmes to enchaunt the pudicitie of the mayde; but, as one no lesse ashamed of that she had don then fearynge to be discovered and committed to shame, retyred with lesse noyse then joye of her message, levynge Julya rejoysyng the goodnes of her fortune, that had delivered her so saffelye from the perills of so greate a mischiefe; persuadynge her selfe hensfurth to use the pollyeye of the serpent in stoppynge her eares, leaste with the assistaunce of time, and libertie to here her speke, she might unhappely fal into the daunger of her charme. Wherin she semed to observe the rule of wisdom, which forbidd all women of honest parte the cacquett or companye of them that go about to corrupte their chastetie, seinge that she that willingly admittes and listeneth to the infectious chat of such devouring caterpillers semes in the judgement of the world to be of disposition redy to obey their loare. And what greate battery nede we to beate that fortresse whose captaine demaunds a parley and seweth for composition?

But what was the passion all this while of the poore Ferrarois, yf not such as commonly is incident to them that languishe of the lyke desease; for, waftinge indifferently betwene hope and dispaier, he semed more redye to incurr the daunger of the on then hable to convert the benefyte of the other into a helpe for himself? Wherin he was the rather furthered by the reporte of his bawde; who, denied to perform any parte of her promise, and lesse hable to answere his expectation, retorned as it were with a flea in her eare, and being no lesse ashamed of that she had don then doubtful to procede any further, semed with the reporte of her colde successe, to pronounce the extreme sentence and finall arrest of his life. But love, who first stirred up the humor of his folly, undertaking to be his guide during the conveigh of this buysines, wolde not leve him alone in the middeste of his pagaunte without sufficiente matter to treate uppon; neither thought he it time to

present the catastrophe or dismiss him from the stage till he had plaied the uttermost acte of his folly. Wherfore, fedynge the fondling with vaine suggestion, and dandlynge him stil with diverse arguments and likelyhodes of good successe, offred therwith the assistaunce of a new devise; which was, that seing praiers coulde not prevaile nor importunityes take place, and the franke offer of his continual service not only refused, but resolved her so depely in the disdaine and hate of his remembrance, that she abhorred his company no lesse then the presence of the cockatrice or baselyke serpent, he shold retire to th' attempte of money, as a sure helpe to supplie the weakenes of his former devises; whose force, albeit is so great that of itselfe it is hable to pearce the strongest tower of a kyngdom, being the chefest engin as the poets faine that opened Jupiter the doare of the brazen tower wherin the faier doughter of Achrises was curiously kept, yet hath it no power to approche the pallais of vertue, and lesse hable to invade or make any breache into the hart confirmed in pure chastitie: wherof our poore Julya hath left an undowted example to all degrees of future succession. For she, resolved wholy in the true ymitacion of vertue, rejected al offers of filthy gaine, accompting the contentment of the mynde to excede al the riches of the world, neyther thought shee her worthy of due veneracion, nor meete to be admitted in the feloshypp of the tryed sorte, that, with a constant profe of their faith, do not make their chastitie of as greate admiration as the frugilitie of man semes great in doating upon a beautie that fadeth as a shadow, and of lesse continuance then a flower. But nowe to your vallett of chamber, who, somwhat revyved with a new hope of good lucke in the sequele of this second devise, preferred yt ymediatly to execucion; and, encoraging the bawde wyth the offer of his hope, instructed her eftesones with newe termes more vehement to perswade then likely to spede; and so, dismissing this seconde embassage, commites her to the goodnes of fortune. Here mother bee, loden with honey and jewels, retires again to her former trade of shame; wher, marching with no lesse corage then hope of good spede, thought her selfe armed with sufficient wepons to enter the

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fortresse, and to put the prisoner into the possession of him that desired nothing so much as to enjoye the pillage of so precious a praye. Albeit she fished afor the nete, and made her reckoning without her hoast; for, assone as shee comes to the cottage of Julya, and began to enter into the preamble of her embassage, openynge with-all the bore of her marchandise and jewels, the mayde, abhorring no lesse the company of the bawde then lothing the sight of the ministers of corrupcion, could not so bridle her humor of just anger, but, interrupting her bablyng discourse, shee seased in hast upon the jewls and other presents, which, without respect of their valew, she cast into the middest of the strete, imparting the like curtesie to the lewde bringer, whom shee toke by the sholders, and thrust out of her house, with threats that yf shee adventred eftesones to come thither, she would present her with her message afor the Ladye Marquise, who hated suche trolls and corrupters of youth, as a pestilence, or worse infection; sayng besides that he that sent her gave sufficient profe of his follie, in seking to seduce her by money and presents, that toke no pittie of his teares and former complaints of dolor: neyther was he lesse vyle to thincke to buye her with money, that ys not to be solde but by the price of vertue, then she detestable afore God and the worlde that mesureth her honor by the price of her profit: warnyng her (as for all) hensfurth to desist for feare of the reward of shame, and he to rest contented with the wrong he had alredy don, without pressing her any further to put his falte and punishment in publicacion. Which last threates stroke such a feare into the hart of the olde hag, with a present dispaier to prevaile any waie in the pursute of her quest, that, being only glad to escape so wel the danger of her deserving, she retired in hast to the seely Ferraroys; to whome (in place of good newes or plesant reporte of her successe) she mynistred perswacions to correct hys fancye, and forgett to love suche one as makes no accompte of hys service; willing him withal to plant hys affection in some better soyle, upon suche one as were not brutishe or voyd of reason to requyt the meryt of his service. 'For,' saieth she, 'thies beasts, and impes

Money the mynisters of corrupcion.

whithout wit or order of civilitie, do also lack discrecion to consider in cases of love, or yelde the due meede of true affection; neither can they degenerat from the climat of their base discent, or do other thinge then suche as the wilfull loare of their follie doth lead them unto. And beyng favored (as it were of nature) with the gyfte of a certen beautie, whiche bringes them in estimacion amongest men, they are so assotted in the humor of selfewill, that they seme rather to abuse the benefyte of so precious a jewel then worthie to weare so rare an ornament. And for this' (sayeth she) 'that will not be moved with prayer nor present, nor anye devise serve to reclaime her haggard mynd (seaming but to quarrel with all offers of curtesie) I cannot thyncke that it ys some hard rocke, converted in the shappe of a woman or fygure of beautie, to become the tyrranouse tormenter of them that unhappely are sommoned to serve her. Wherfore, seing I am denied to assist you by my travaile accordynge to my promyse, I praye you lett me advise you to stoppe the course of affection, and choke the chanell of your love, affore it overflowe the hope of recovery. And cease any longer to feede the humor of your passion with the remembrance of her, that semes to take pleasure in youre gryef.' 'Well! well!' sayth the dolorous lover, 'I woulde I coulde as easely forget, as you are apte to perswad, or that you had thusmuch advised me afore you gave me assuraunce of relyef by youre dylygence; but chyefly I wish that I hadd eschued the yll when I admitted the cause: then had I reserved my lybertye, lived free from passion, voyd from unacquainted extremyties, and not lament to late in thys sorte myne owne disaster, nor stande neade to communicate wyth you who selleth youre advise for money, and makes your travayle the marchaunt of fylthye gaine. Albeyt, seynge want of discresion hath styrred up this error, and the folly of youth prevayled above the force of wisdom, I muste be dryven to make of necessytye a lawe, and geve place to the sentence of my present fortune, greving, notwithstandynge, that the frendshyppe and undouted zeale of affection which I bare her shold reape the fruts of rigour and receve the merytte of their vertue at the handes of

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crueltie. At the least I wil not so dispair, but that the argument of a future hope shall kepe me in breathe, and, expectyng the benefytt of a better time, I wil comitt myselfe to the goverment of pacience, who, as I have harde, is the onely tuchestone to trye a man that ys fallen into termes of affliction.' But here the galland semed rather to feede the tyme then bynd himselfe to performe th' effecte of his owne wordes; neyther mente he to suffer hys last resolution to passe for currant money, and muche lesse to content hym selfe with his cardes. Seyng he lyked not his game, and seing he colde not prevaile by pollicye nor wyn the forte by somonce or offer of composicion, he determined (as his laste helpe) to use the uttermoste of hys forces and performe hys conquest what so ever yt cost him. But thusmuche by the waye. Ther ys no greate enterprice, to what ende so ever it tende, whether yt bee guided by vertue or conducted by vice, whose effecte can aunswere th' expectacion of th' inventour, onlesse ther be a roomthe reserved for a thirde to perticipate therein, as wel for the expedicion of the cause as suer conveyghe of the mysterye: soo thys vallet of chamber, resolved absolutely in the pursuete of hys queste, imparteth the discourse of hys love passed, hys synyster successe in the same, hys dyverse assalttes to the forte, and hys sundrye and sharpe repulses, too a dashbuckler of the bushop's, who made no more conscience to be a minister of evill then the outlawes of Shooters Hil use curtesie in stripping our marchauntes and after send them to London with penyles budgettes. He forgate not also to make him prevye to hys laste resolucion, cravyng therein the assystaunce of hys fryndeshyppe, in suche sorte as, uppon th' ynstant, he made hym advowe the same to th' uttermoste of his power. 'Onelye,' sayeth he, 'devise the waye; and my diligence shall declare the zeale I bere thee, with the desire I have too place thee in the bosome of thy felicitie.' 'Yt were a follie,' saieth this desperat lover, 'to reiterate the order of my former devises, and to present her eftesones with offices of curtesie, it were but time lost: onlie there restes to offer her the racke—I meane to oppresse her with force. Neyther doo I care what penyworths be made of my life so that I may in

any sort revenge the obstinate crueltie of her, who, peradventure after the first taste of the plesant jewystes of love, wil slacke the bridle of her rigour, and converte the harde and angrye clymate of her invincible humor into a disposicion of lesse difficultie, and she easier hereafter to be intreated. Neither wold I have the to respect the danger or impossibilitie of th' enterprice, consideringe the beginninge of al thinges importe a certeine difficultie; but, after the oncet is geven, the worste is paste, and no cause of feare or doubt remaynes; but, waighinge the plesure thou shalt do me, ymagine also how depely thou shalt leve me in thie debte, which wil stody to requite it wyth the lyke, and al I have els that may stande the in steade.' Wherwyth he prevailed so muche over the vyperous inclynacion of hys cotreatur, that, albeit he knew hys consent weare not so wicked as the doing of the acte more detestable, yet, waighing the present offer of his frendship with the great authoritie he had with the bysshoppe, and forgetinge the duetie of hys conscience, confirmed eftsones his consent, willinge the desolate lover to take harte at grasse and repose himselfe chiefely upon the aide of hys frendshippe. 'And because,' sayth he, 'the chiefe conveighe of thys mysterie consistes in the consente of convenyente tyme and place, let it be youer whole indevour to watche whenne shee goeth into the fieldes alone; to th' end that, in usinge our advantage, we may have time to do our feate wythout dread or danger of any.' This was not so soone agreed upon betwene them two as th' effect folowed with the expedicion of a momente. For the craftie lover marked diligently the howers and tymes of her ordynary labors; neither cold she haunt so secret a place but his eye was redye to discover her. And so, lyeng in ambushe in the way of her usuall trade to the corne feldes, had her at last brought to his stale. Which, after he had imparted to his marrow, they failed not to followe the trace in as softe and subtil manner as the wilie fox; who, when he comes to spoile the powltrye of the fermor, is so circumspecte in his doinge that the leaste noyse of the worlde makes hym take a bushe til hys feare bee passed: so thys Ferrarois and his fellowe pursewed the pore maide, by such secret and unknowen

The beginning of every thing seames harde.

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wayes, and wyth a spede more thenne necessarie for th' execucion of a good and lawful busines, that her clyente appered at her backe afore she was ware; who, havinge no time to spende in circumstaunce, saluted her wyth the cause of hys commynge in thys sort:—'If lengthe of tyme be the true tuch-stone to try a difference betwene the fained harte and firme affeccion, you have a sufficient proofe of my constancy; or if longe service wyth sincere loyaltie may seme meritorious, you alone can judge my diligence and I accuse your crueltie. But if the trybute of true frendshippe is to be paide wyth a replie of semblable affection, why doo you in thys sort suspende my sute, doblinge my passion in denying the thynge that is due to me by just title? How can you thus longe kepe me in captivitie that offers my lyfe for a ransome; or when I sue for my right, to reward me wyth crueltie which I have not deserved and lesse seminge for one of your calibre and calling? It is time nowe to strike saile and remove the vaile of your ancyente rigor, whereof I have tasted of long time, and, waighynge indifferently the meryt of my martirdom, to yelde me meede accordingly. Let me once taste of the vertue of your bownty, as well as I have hetherto lyved under the yoke of youre crueltie, so that the meede of my owne deserving may at last geve end to the evils whych I suffer by your meanes?' Wherwyth the poore Julya, no lesse amased at his sodein encownter in that place then unprovided of an answere to his doubtefull demaunde, was dryven to replie according to the shortnes of her tyme and leasure. 'If you appeale to the length of tyme for declaracion of your loyal love and proffe of constancy,' sayth she, 'I crave no other judge of your fowle desier, rather to robb me of that I holde moste dere, then to honor me with the offer of true affeccion. Wherin I am justified by the diverse disorderly meanes whych heretofore you have suborned to advaunce your wicked intent. Neyther deserve I of right th' imputacion of crueltie, and much lesse of unsemely rigor as you terme it, considering I neither used the one nor the other but as a special vertue in defence of myne honestie. And touching your passion and torment, procedyng rather by want of discrecion in your self then occa-

sion on my part, I see neither cause to complayne your grefe nor reason to releve it. Neither can I answere you with other termes but commit you to the merytt of your follye. In wishinge me to geve end to your evills, you presse with more then is in my power; seinge I was neither previe to the beginning nor cause of the continuance, and much lesse experienced in the cure of such diseases. Only, I pray you, forbere eftsones to pursewe me, who, beinge not equall as you have saide in qualytie or callinge, is lesse redy to agre wyth you in consent, or fulfill the beastely appetyte of your will: desiringe you, for ende, to let me lyve as I am, and not to serve me hensfurth wyth any processe of vaine ymportunyties. For I hadde rather indure the martirdome of a thousand torments then do the thinge that myne honor can not justifie.' Wherwith, regarding with good eye the fierce countenance of her enemy, arguing the present troble of his minde, and fearing withal, by the secret instinct of her hart, the nere approche of an evil torne, began to amend her pace; which, also, she dobled now and then, as one that durst not ron from him that she most abhorred. But he that was loth to lose the benefyte of so good a time, and lesse willing to have so swete a morsel taken out of his mouth, fained a certein offer of his service to conduct her to the towne, preferring therwith (as of freshe) diverse requestes to take pittie of his passion. Which, albeit she hard wythout any aunswere, yet was it not in her power to passe the hands of her destinie, which by this tyme had brought them into a place convenient for th' execution of hys execrable enterprise, far from the town and out of the ordenary hawnt of company, and (that which best favored his intent) in the myddest of a corne fielde, being a covert most convenient for such an act. Wher (having now but one part to play) he taketh her, and offers to kisse her. Which, albeit she resisted to the uttermost of her litle strength, cryeng out againste his force and fowle meaning, yet it was but time lost, considering she was ymediatly assailed by the other, who, perswading her to scilence, said her bravery was to great for one of her calling, and that they came not thither to take pitty of her complaints, neither shold she escape so good cheape as she

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thought. She desired them to abstein from violation of her body, and geve her what death they thought good. They excused them selves of any intent to doo mordore. 'Only,' saye they, 'we are com hither to bend you by force that will not bow by any entreatye. Wherefore, if you thincke you have any wronge, referr the cause to the longe contynuance of your crueltie, which is now at point to be revenged.' Pytty it was to heare the dolorous tunes of the poore maide with the miserable skrikes which she thrue upp into the ayre to witnes her innocencye: wherein shee contynued, wythout any eccho of reschewe, til the detestable pallyard had spoyled the flower of her virginitie. And then he began to perswade her to pacyence, willing her hereafter not to become so curious of her chastitie, nor refuce to admit the offer of his frendshipp; wherof he promised so largly that (if she wold) he wold take her from her father and kepe her at his charges, presenting at th' instant a purseful of money; willing her thensfurth to caste awaye all cause of care and dispose her selfe onlye to cherishe and make much of the rest of her life. 'For the whiche,' saith he, 'you shal fynde me as careful as you shal thinke convenient. And, if hereafter you have a desyre to mary, doubt not to repose yourselfe therin upon me; for I wil so wel provide and assiste you wyth so good a porcion that the same shal be plentifull inoughe to susteine you and releve the needfull condicion of your parentes.' But she, no lesse loathing the offer of his filthy promise then detesting the villen that wold not cease yet to corrupt her, havinge by this time recovered her sences, defyed him wyth his mynisters of infection; saing that, although his villeny and force hath defiled the chastitie of her body and geven him th' effecte of his lascivious desier, yet shold he never be hable eyther wyth his money or other wayes to corrupt the sincerytie of her hart. 'Whose innocencye,' saith she, 'wyl tryumphe over thy execrable acte, afore Him who is to yelde the due hyer of thy travaile. Is it in thy power to satisfie or leve me contented that hast taken that from me which al the world cannot eftsones restore me? No! no! it is God of whom I must claime satisfaction in punishing the two trayterous *Borreaus* and

Julya ravished by force.

Money the ministers of infection.

ravenous spoilers of the virginitie of me, pore wretch, who was borne to abyde the sentence of my destinye.' The galland, thinckyng to appease th' extremitie of her passion, began to prefer perswacions of comfort: which she defied with such spite and bitter termes of just reproche against him, that, lothyng to suffer her eyes to feede uppon him that had infected all the partes of her body, tolde him that the only veiwe of his villanous lookes made her forgett all order of pacience. Which he toke as a comission to depart, fearyng withal that the noyse of her complaints might bechaunce com to the eares of som that passed that way, who, understandyng the discourse of the rape, wold make reporte to the bishop, whose profession and othe is chefelye to punishe offendours in the like accydentes. DISCOURSE VIII

Here the sorowful Julya, being void of companie, savyng the doleful ecchoes of woodes and ryvers that answered her cryes wyth lyke complaint, renewes the warre of her present desaster; which, tearing her heares without respecte, and quarrellyng with the dowery that nature had gyven her, wold gladly have touched her with ymputacion in makyng her incydent to so wretched a destenye, in exclaiming still uppon the malice of her Fortune, yf th' abundaunce of teares, accompayned wyth sighes of pytyfull disposicion, hadd not so stopped the course of speche that for the time she was dryven into scilence. And beyng by litle and litle restored againe to the libertie of her tounge, and the source of her sorowe somewhat retyred, she made a short invocacion to God in this sorte:—'Oh hevenlye father,' sayeth she, 'I see that the rigour of thy justice hath prevailed above the benefytt of thy mercie, and that thou doste awarde me this harde penaunce for the punyshment of my faltes passed. With what face, alas! shall I behold my poore father, whose compfort, as it consisted in my wel doing, so his greefe wil be without comparison, hering of the hard termes of my myschaunce. In desolacion shal he knitt upp the remeynder of his old yeres, that commyng into any place, the remembraunce of my falte drawing the blood of shame into his face, will make him blushe and eschewe the companye wher afor he neded not have douted to have marched amongest Beautie.

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the best. And shall I dissemble that whiche I intende not to hydd, or kepe it secret that toucheth me so nere? No! no! as th'innocencye of my mynde is recorded afore God, so, because the world shall also witnes how clere I was from consente, I wil use no other water to washe away so great a spott then the sacryfice of death; whiche I will followe with no lesse expedicion then the treason of the villaine hath bene cruel in takinge from me that whyche made me to lyve.' Wherwithe, dismissing her complaint, she ceassed also from teares and put herselfe in order to go to the house of her father, who (by evill lucke) was not then at home. There she puts on the best garment she had, and attyring herselfe in order to go to some great meeting or banquet, shittes the doare of her cotage, and leading her yonger syster in her hande, went furthwith to an awnt of hers, who, as one overcharged with sicknes and yeres, was not hable to sturr out of her bedd. Affore whome, as she was in the middest of the repeticion of her chaunce reveiling the whole order and circumstance of the fact—which she cold not do without great effusion of teares; for that the very remembrance of the deede restored a freshe alaram of her sorowes —she fel sodeinly into a qualme or passion of soundyng; wherein she remayned traunced wythout all argument of lyfe, til by the helpe of the assistance, she was eftsones delyvered to th'use and libertie of her senses; when, quarelling stil with the horror of the fact, and desire to be revenged by death, she seamed to rebuke her owne ymbecillitie and faintnes of corage, saing,—'What sign of vertue is this to seame to shrink, when arguments of constancy ought chiefly t'appere? Who wyll desire to lyve that hath lost the renoume of honor, which ought to be the most precious jewel and badge of the lyfe? Or what pleasure is it to possesse the presence of the body alredy spotted with infamye, when the soule, wery of her habytacion, is redy to resigne her auncyent aboade? What felicitie have they in lyfe, that, being the gaze and wonder of the multytude, cannot claime the priviledge of any place but the people wyl point at them? Neyther can they hyde theym in so secrete a corner, but infamy wyll hunt them out, and shame dis-

cover them, attending them to the very end of theyr daies. No! no! let not them lyve that are desirous to dye; and death is moste acceptable to suche as hate the fruicion of lyfe. For my parte, I loth alredy the remembrance of lyfe, seing I have lost the chefest pillor of the same. Wherof, I meane to make spedy declaracion, by the sentence I have alredy pronounced of my ende. Wherin it shall appeare to the worlde, that, although my bodye have tasted of the malice of the wicked by force, yet my mynde remains entire without spott or consentement to the villany; whiche, as my chiefe bequeste and last testament in this worlde, I leve registred in the remembrance of you, good awnt, to make relacion to my desolat parents, and the whole worlde besides, of th' accident of my wretched desaster; and that although your unhappy neece and miserable Julia hath, by meare force, lost the outward show of her honor, yet her conscience remeinyng unspotted and soule cleare, ready to flye to the heavens to witnes her integrytye afore the sacred theatrye or tribunall seate of God, can not diparte wyth worthye contentement affore I offer my lyf to the waves, to purifie the fylthye spotte wherewith my bodye remeins painted on all parts, by th' infection of the detestable rape of force.' Wherewith she departed, not taryinge the replie of her awnt, who thoughte to have diswaded her from the pursuete of her desperate intent. And beinge comme to the river of Oglyo, kyssing her sister, with a last crye to God to receyve her soule to his mercy, she lept hedlong into the water; who, as a mercyles element, respectinge neyther th' innocency of her cause, nor desperate order of dying, committed her to the botomles throts and goolphes of the sourges. Whiche was the ende of this miserable Julia; whose lyfe only deserves commendation for th' example of her vertue, and deathe worthie to be committed to oblyvyon for the signes of desperacion wherewyth it was infected.

Julya drowneth herselfe.

But after this chaunce burst out into tearmes and became the report of the people, God knoweth what generall desolacion was amonge all the estate of the cytie; as well for the strangnes of the facte, as for that the villeyne was fledd that caused the brute: who, if he had ben taken,

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had don penance of this falte with the losse of his lyfe in example of others. The bodye was founde by the diligence of Loys Gonzaga, who woulde not suffer it to be buryed in the churche-yarde, or other sanctuarye, because of the desperat maner of her death, but caused it to be solempnelye accompanyed with the teares and great dule of diverse ladyes into a place or grave in the felde; where he ment in shorte tyme to sett upp a tombe of marble, wyth a monument of the particular discourse of the vertues and singuler gyftes of grace in his pore countrewoman, whose deathe I wishe may learne al estats to eschewe the perill of dispaier, and order of lyfe to instructe all the yonge ladyes of England to resiste the charmes and sugred allurements of love; who, the more he is feasted with pleasaunt regardes of the eye, or encountred with secret conference in corners, or courted wyth embassages, or, lastlye, banqueted wyth dishes of delicate toyes or vaine importunityes, the more is he redye to invade, and apte to overcome. But, on the contrarye parte, the waye to kepe warre wyth that vaccabound, and to flee his infections, is (as Julia did) to marche against hym with a flagge of vertue, usyng wythall the pollycy of Ulixes in stopping your eares from the pepered harmonye of them, that, delitinge only in the praye of your outwarde beautye, have no respecte to the ornament of the soule; whiche, beinge kepte pure and undefyled to th'ende, yealdes you a rewarde of immortalitye, and your renowme never to be rased out of remembraunce tyll th'extreame dissolucion of the worlde.

DISCOURSE IX

THE YMPUDENT LOVE of the LADY OF CHABRYE wyth her procurer Tolonio, together wyth the detestable morders committed betwene theim.

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THE ARGUMENT

THERE was never mischiefe of former time, nor vice in present use, wherein men are, or have bene, more drowned or drawen by a beastly desyer then in th' execrable and deadly synne of whoredome. By the which, besides that the spirituall fornicacion is figured in some sorte, yet is it forbidden unto us expresly by th' inviolable lawes, not written in the tables wher th' auncientes were wonte to grave directions and orders to pollitique states of the Romaines, Athenyens, Egiptiens, or Sparteins, but recorded in th' everlasting booke, within the whiche the veraie finger of God hath sealed his infallible statutes. Wherof as he wolde, that his children and faithfull heires of his kingdom were made partakers, with desyer and indevor of ymitacion, so we are al warned by the same defence, that, besides the wrong and harme we do to our owne bodies, we offend heynously against the health of our soules, specially in corruptinge the wife of our neighbour, with th' abuse of that part of her which is necessarie to be garded with as great care and watche as we reade was used somtime in the supersticious ceremonies of the vestals of Rome in keping a contynuall fyer in their temple. The greatnes also of this synne of adulterie, bringing (as you se) an equal hurt to the soule and bodye, hath forced a wonderful severetie in both the lawes, punishinge by deathe such as do prophane that hollye and invyolable bond and bed of mariage, wher is only a place of purity, and no oblacion to be offred or admitted but the sacrifice of honeste and lawful substance. Besides, what slaunders and mortalitie amongest men have spronge out of the vicious fountaine of that synne, the mariage-bed of Menelaus, defyled by the kinges sonne of Troye, hath left sufficient example and cause of exclamacion amongest the Phrigiens, with reason to all posterities to deteste such villanie as a vice moste abhomynable. In Egipt, the

The bible th' infallible booke.

Dyvine and humaine lawes.

Sychemetyens, for like respect, under Abraham and Isaac, have felt the mighty hand of God; althoughe their offence (in some sort) was excusable by ignoraunce, for that they thought the wyves which they toke, had bene unmaried. Likewise, if there be any faithe in the poeticall fictions, we see th' argumentes of most of their tragedies were founded eyther upon the punishmente or dispair of such as, not hable to revenge the wrong of their lascivious wife and wicked Sathanist her mynyon, convert and execute their rage and furie upon theim selves. Wherin our worlde at this daye is growen to such a malicious golphe and bottomles sea of vices, that the wilde nacions, without eyther awe of God or feare of his lawes, governed only by an instinct of nature, are more curious to kepe the honor of their bedd then diverse contryes in the harte and bowells of Christendom, wher th' adulteror is not punished but by protestacion or attorney, and wher the poore man that receiveth the wrong is rather jested at and pointed to with forqued fingers (according to the Italyan bragge), then he persecuted in any sorte that procureth the evill. Which partialitye, or rather unlawfull favor of the lawe and deputies of justice, serveth as sufficiente encouragement both to the one and other whoremonger. Wherupon followeth so many morders of husbandes by meane and handes of their wives, to th' ende they may passe their amorous practyse with more pleasure and lesse feare; the poyseninge and drowninge of so many lawfull children for advancement of those whose bastarde race is bewtified with a masqued title of true procreacion, whose end is, sewerly, matched with destruction to themselves, and everlasting dishonour to their parentes and posteritie. Wherof, behold here (you ladyes) a familiar proffe in the blacke picture or portraytur of this bloddie gentlewoman, who, forgetting the vertue of her youth worthelie renowmed of all men, colde not be satisfyed wyth th' abuse of her age and hoarie heares, touchinge th' incestious prostitucion of her body, without the nomber of unnaturall morders wherwyth you maye see her tyrannous handes dyed, and th' innocent soules of her husband and ii sonnes, kneling afore the troane of justice for vengance of her wickednes.

GEFFRAIE FENTON'S

IF wee maye creditt the reapportes of Fraunce and Italye, we nede not doubt of the singularyties of Provyncia which the chronicles of both contries do advowche to owe nothinge to any one corner in Christendome, eyther for the glorious scyte and scituacion of the place, fertilletie and plentye of every thinge whiche pleasure or necessitie can wish, riche and statelie cities, builded with a forme of majestie more then the common sorte of townes, and peopled besides wyth everye sorte of cyvilitie and curtesye inhabytantes. In the middest whereof is a litle village called Lagrassa, planted (as it seames) in a pleasant vale, yelding a chiefest bewtie and furniture of glory to the whole platt or circuite of Provyncia: for it is assisted on everie parte with the champaine, furnished wyth all sortes of delite, both of wod and water, wyth a glistering glee of the grene meadowes, who yelde suche a contynual fertilytie that (if it wer not the devowring jawes of their greedie cattal) a man wold thinke they were specially favored with a spring time at al seasons in the yere. In diverse partes of this herbage, florishing with blossoms of every entising flower, shal you see (as it were) certeine cloase arbours and open alleyes, beutified with the smal spraies of lymmon trees, oringes, and *granades*, offring to be thankful (with their several frutes) to strangers passing that way, with every other graft of pleasant view or tast, dispersed with such order, both in round, quadrant, and tryangle forme, that only nature her selfe is to bee thoughte the chiefe woorkewoman in that misticall conveighe. Whyche resembleth rather a seconde grove or gardyne of Thessalya—so muche comended by Herodotus, Plyny, Strabo, besides other of the poeticall crewe—then a place of general haunte, assailed comonlye with passyngers of all sortes and continuallie spoiled by th'inhabytantes, who make oppen warre both with the boodds and braunches, frute and trees, of this vale,

intrenched (as yt were) on every side with greate hilles; whose heighte and hugenes defendes the violence of hurtefull wyndes, and assistes the naturall goodnes of the soile with the moysture of diverse streames, droppinge out of the bellies of diverse rockes, norrished in th' intralles of the saied mountes. In this provinciall paradise, then, and not far from the saied towne, is a castell, whereof was Lorde and owner a noble gentleman of the countrey, who, in the entrey of hys floryshynge time, maried a young gentlewoman of equall honor and heighte of estate to himselfe; who, for her part, had a grace to governe the hoatt time of her youthe with such modestie that her honeste conveighe and integretie of lyfe seamed to deserve no lesse then the vertue of Lucresia, according to t' historians, or chaste abstinence of Penelope, by the fictions of the Poetes. But, whether the secrett hypocrasie of her infected mynde colde no longer conceile or refrayne to event the frutes of suche villanie, or whether age had abated the former force of her husbande, drayning his synews and vaines of their auncient moysture, with conversion of his sapp of strenghte into withered humors of debilitie, or participating, paradventure, withe the desyer and dispocicion of suche as delite in the taste of inordynat pleasure with often chaunge of dyot, havinge alredye passed the uttermoste of fyftie yeares, of a chaste and vertuouse younge ladie became an old strompet, without honestie or shame; and whose delicate youthe gave more argumentes and effect of stayed lyfe then her olde age hable to mortefye or keepe under the provacions propre onlye to the follye of unbridled youth—to whom alone is due the title of founde affection, with actes of smal discrecion. And, as the Frenche adage advowcheth, that of a young saint proceedes an old Sathan, and a timely hermitt makes a tyrannous devil, so this diabolical lady, supplienge the yeres of her youth with loyaltie towardes her husband, necessarie praier and invocacion to God, with due respect to the order and guide of her house, was seene to make a conversion of thys vertues into a desyer and effect of no lesse detestacion then the offence of Cayn, or other morderer: for that, without respect to the nomber of her children, or viewe of hoarie

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haires with other argumentes of age, she began to practise pollecies in love, wishinge in her husbande a continuance of that whiche nature can not give twise to any man, and that whereof she seamed not halfe so desyerus in the veraie heate of the flame whiche kindleth the sensuall appetitt, makyng us sometime excede the order of reason in performinge the sommonce of sensualitie. Wherein, feeling a wante in her husbande to satisfye her filthie thurste, and wearie alredie with his colde compfort in bedd, entred into devise to furnishe her lacke that waye. Whereby (as yt chaunced) she wroughte the webb of destruction to her selfe, with continuall infamie to her house for ever. Whyche bee the ordinarie frutes of this beastelie pleasure, breeding the tempest under a masque or counterfaite vaile of calme seas, and then to drenche the passingers when they are moste perswaded of assurance. And who wil not confesse (by this authorytie both familiar and true) but love is an undowted rage and furie, seynge he forceth and giveth fyer to that whiche oughte to quenche and conquerr the flame kindled firste by his suggestion.

This gentleman of the castell of Chabrye, hadd for one of his next neyghbours a doctor of the laws, called Messieur Tolonyo, whome (for the creditt of hys learnyng) he used as a chiefe companion; by whyche meanes, also, he hadde the favour of familiar conference with his wife without suspicion; not refusynge diverse tymes in the absence of the knighte to enter the bedd chamber and consulte wyth her uppon her pillowe. Wherein he exacted uppon the honest libertie given hym by the goodman; for that one daye (during hys absence) the advocatt, under cooler to councell the Ladye in certaine affaires touchynge the commoditie of her husbande, came to her bedd-syde, where he behelde her in other sorte then he is wonte to vysitt the cases of lawe for her husbande. Neyther hadd age so altered her complexion but there appered follie in all partes of her face, with other intisinge glees, shrowded under the lyddes of her allurynge eyes, whyche, with his libertie of free accesse, and her contentement to admitt hys compaine, forced the rather an affection in the proccurer. In whome also as shee noted certaine dextereties, no lesse hable to performe the buysynes of the

bedd then to followe the processe of lawe, so shee dyd not only allowe his amarus glaunces, with interest of equal glee on her part, but also (as one whollie devested of th'attyre of shame) made no conscience to discover that part of the bodie whyche nature hathe forbidden to bee seene of anye, and all women of honest parte oughte to kepe from the sighte and knowleadge of man. Whych shee accompained, also, with such lascivius regardes of wanton countenance that the dymmest eyes that bee in love myghte easelie discerne the pathe of her entent, and judge with what fethers her arrowes wolde flye. Wherein, also, Tolonyo, no lesse experienced then the best, forgat not to feede the humor of her meaning wyth speciall tearmes of reproche against the weaknes of th'olde man, condemnynge hym as moste unworthie to enjoye the benefytt of her beautie, and muche lesse to taste in any sorte, of the pleasure or delicatt proporcion of thys Alcyne; who, to further the forwardnes of her doctour, added thies tearmes of complaint to the wordes of hys former reproche:—'Howe ryghtelye maye shee tryumphe with treble felicitie in this worlde, who, delytinge to embrace her husbande, participateth indiffrentlie with the solace of outward joye and pleasure of secrett contentement! The remembraunce of whose happie state, alas! yeldes me double cause of exclamacion agaynste the debilitie of my aged knyghte: bothe for that hys weaknes denyethe force to furnyshe the sportes of the bed, and I, in the heate of desyer, to wyshe and not fynde the chiefeste pillor of my consolacion. Yf I hadd not earste sipped of the cupp of sugred delite, the desyer had dekaied, because I hadd no taste of the pleasure, where the viewe of former solace increaseth my present thurste, and can not bee satysfyed. O yf nature colde broache an other vessell of strengthe in my wythered husbande, or restore a freshe heate to hys dekaied partes, my loathesome life wolde resume eftensones cause of perfect contentement, and I in the mean wile shold do wrong to accuse his present weaknes! What is my passion, thinke you, Seigneur Tolonio, provynge, perforce, the wante of courage in my husbande with the extreme desyer in my selfe? He hathe no other care then too momble hys mornyng

The ladye woethe her procurer under a complaint against the weaknes in her husbande.

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prayers, and *Pater noster* in the night, whilest I (poore sowle), halfe starved, attende a seconde froste or colde compfort in hym, whyche rather mortefyeth my desyer then satisfyeth in any sorte the vehemencye of myne appetytt. And yf sometime I seeke to force a mocion in hym, with indevour to gyve lyfe to his dead sprites, I am aunswered with hollow groanes and excuses of age, that alas my thurste is rather increased then desyer satisfied, and I forced to feede of suche drye banquettes, with no lesse grudge and greeff of mynde then I shoulde take singler pleasure in the companye of one worthie of me, and hable to furnyshe at full th'appointment due in mariage.' All whyche the doctour was no lesse gladd to heare then desyerus to knowe the intent of the discourse; whyche he pursewed in jestinge sorte, saying, 'I am content, madame, you make a tryal in this sort of my loyalty towards you and your house. Albeit I am so persuaded of the corage of your husband that, notwithstanding any impediment by age, he is sufficiently hable to dispatch the affaires of the most likelye and lustie gentlewoman in your traine.' 'Suche' (saith she) 'as knowe nothing but by oponion and imagination, do commonly judge at pleasure upon matters of importance, where they that have felte the effectes, and made an experience of everye point, may resolve accordynge to a troth. Wherin your ignorance acquites you, for this tyme, of imputacion touching the loftines of my husbande; whom as you at unwares accompte a champyon of suche courage that there is no harnesse whiche he is not hable to pearce, so the longe prooff I have had of his worthines may warrante you the contrarye of such conceites: commendynge unto you, withall, the compassion of my distresse with desyer to procure some spedie meane of delyverye or release from this loathsome torment.' Wherewith maister advocat began to excuse hym of any entent to encrease her griefe, what construction so ever she made of his former wordes; protestyng wythal that the offer of death shoulde bee more acceptable unto hym then the simple remembrance to do her the leaste evill in the worlde. And if she sorowed in the prooffe of a badd husbande, his greefe was no lesse in the veraye viewe of her languishynge state, 'that I

wishe, madame,' saith he, 'that my indevor might discharge you of paine, or the spoile of my lyfe, and all that I have of the worlde, confirme your quiet accordyng to the consent of your owne minde. Then should you see whether your Tolonyo woulde put any difference betwene pleasant promises, whiche every man can make, and assured effect, whiche few men performe; with this further experience (yf it please you to employe me) to excede every one of your domesticall traine in yeldyng to the sommonce of your commaundement, albeit it importe the sacrifice of my lyfe or dissolution of honor: both which I accompte happely preferred yf they end in the pursewte of your service.' Where with he seased upon one of her delicate handes, whiche he forgat not to honor with the often printe of his mouth in sondry sortes of kysses; whiche, as they argued th' uttermost of his further entent, so she furthered an expedicion of th' indifferent desyers of theim both, in grasping his hand with no lesse affection then he did amarus homage to al her tender partes, with this shorte question in smylynge order. 'Yf the goodnes of your fortune, Seigneur Tolonio, and the synister guide of my destines, accompanied with the mocion of love, wolde give you as muche power over me as you seame desierous to enjoye my favor, howe would you accompte of suche preferment, or what judgement woulde you set of her liberall offer, who, neyther respectyng lyfe nor regard to honor, is here to leave you her harte in gage and her bodye to the use of your pleasure?' 'Ah! madame,' saith this amarous *cyvilyan*, 'howe my unworthynes makes me dispair ever to cooll the frute of so greate a gaine; and the feare I feele, to crave that I desyer moste, yeldes me no lesse doubtefull of th' effect of your offer. Albeit, on th' other part, the honor and felicitye I ymagin in the preferment hath prickt me alredye so full of corage that the worlde hath nothyng of suche hardnes which I dare not attempte, nor any thinge of so greate impossibilitye whiche wyll not appeare easye in the pursuete, so that my travell maye receive his hyer at the handes of your bountye.' 'Pardon me I beseche you in discoveryng that whiche almoste I kepte secret from mine owne harte, and yf my rashenes have

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offended you, it maye lyke you to do justice upon your selfe, whose authoritie (with the force of extreme passion) hath forced me to a lavishenes in the thyng whiche I durste not determyne, and muche lesse seeke to set abroche in deede.' Here the shameles lady tolde him his last request had prevented her longe meaninge. 'For' (saith she) 'you have hyt the marke whereat I thoughte to shoote. Wherein as I am contented to imparte credit to your wordes, with persuacion of sufficient assuraunce in your fidelitye, so, I praye you, embrace mine offer of semblable curtesye; with addicion, that your desyer to enjoye me is nothing in respect of the firme opinion I have to be so wholly yours as your selfe shal devise. Wherof, I am heare to seale th' articles of assurance in such sorte as you thinke good.' Wherupon, I thinke, no sortes of kysses or follyes in love were forgotten, no kynde of crampe, no pinchyng by the lytle finger, nor his hande layed softelye in her delicate dugge. And she againe, with her armes aboute his necke to yelde tribut to his curtesye, was not unmindefull (I am sewer) to communicate (in this place) the circumstance of her longe love, and howe often she had beene at point to make declaration of her zeale, with the causes of restraint till that hower: whiche, yf she blessed accordyng to the greatnes of her felicitie, he thought it a dutye to honor with treble thankes gevynge, performing there their firste earnest of their unhappye pleasure to th' indifferent contentement of both th' adulterous, who there gave order for the conveighe of the rest of their licencious sequele.

Here, besides a consommacion and effect of detestable whordom, wherein the one with impudencie obteineth a gloot of her insatiable luste, and the other unhappely yeldes to th' unbridled will of a develishe woman, yet is the foundacion laied betwene the ij wretches to encrease their offence with an acte of greater synne; for, besides the vice of contaminacion of an other man's bedd, the wicked doctor aggreed to a mortall conspiracie and treason agaynst hym whoe was neither doutful of hys honestye nor suspicious of hys fayth; and whose lyberallitye deserved a retourne of more credit then to weave the webb of his destruction, for that his

chiefest meane of sustentation grewe by the fees and other assistance of the gentleman. Joseph the Hebrue abstained from like acte, although he was assailed with semblable importunities in the house of the prince of Egypte, desyeryng rather to prove th' uttermuste rigour of hym who thoughte hym selfe offended, then to synne haynously in the syghte of the greate God; from whose eyes no secrett is conceiled, whiche in the end he doth not discloase, with no lesse justice in punishing the faulte then he hath used longe pacience in tolleracion of the wickednes. Let every man beholde here an experience of the malice of those, that, under the vaile of good learnyng, bolstered with a dissembled showe of a certeine vaine, knowledge and skill to discerne the good from the evil, and trye the difference of the juste from the unjuste, do studie altogether the perversion of justice, to seduce all good order and honesty and abuse (under coollour of honest faith) the simplicitie of the good sorte. Whereof howe many examples of iniquitie do we see now-a-daies in diverse our professours of learning, whose vanitie procureth so many divorcementes betwene the man and wyf; and yet they affirme (for the most part) that such actes are not tollerable, neither by th' ordinance of God, institution of men, nor any authoritie in the *cyvilyan* skoole. Besides, howe many are to be seene, who, puffed up with a litle smatteringe skil in eyther of the lawes, which rather settes abroche the humour of their vanity then confirmes them in good order or integritie of judgement or lyving, do trade only in corrupting the good and sound partes of every one, indusing some to sedicion, other to thefte, perjurye, and false witnes, bearing others to habandon their countrey and parentes, with the societie and felowshippe of all their frendes. And yet, who hath a better grace then they in preferryng an absolute puritye of lyfe, a feare of the lawes, obedience to theyr soveraignes, reverence to their parentes, and respecte to the league of loyal frindship? Yea, our unhappye world, or rather the malice of our cursed tyme, hath sturred upp amongest us suche store of skilfull clarkes, or rather dyvinyng devills, who, bolking out a false philosophie, have (God amende it!) infected the whole worlde with the ayre of their

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corrupcion. And, not satisfyed in th'abuse of the mortall wretches, and seducyng the fragilitye of man wyth a flattering allurement of sensualitye and pleasures of the fleshe, begyn, by litle and lytle, to dresse war againste God, with opinion to conquere that invincible power and firste cause; who, laughing for a tyme at their follyes, wil (no doubte) make them feele in the ende (with the due punishment and smart of their fond ymaginacions) that neither man, nor his vaine knowledge, is of any force against hym from whose troane wee receave th'inspiracion and breath of all goodnes, vertue, and wisdom. Wherin I am moved to such a plainnes touchynge the vanitie of diverse our learned men now-a-daies, by the sinister succes and diversatie of rare matters happening amongest us, and for that we se the most parts of Christendom, rather tormented by suche as abuse the vertue of true knowleadge with desier to incense contrarietie of sectes, then invaded with th'incursions of the blasphemous infidells and ennemies of our religyon. And trulye the domesticall servant, in credit or truste with his maister, and evil gyven or affected towardes his lord, is more to be feared then a whole armye of ennemies standyng in battaile araye in the felde. Wherof the Lorde of Chabry maie bee a familiar experience, by the meanes of this pernicious advocat; who, abusyng the ladye, and she comittyng lyke wronge on the behalfe of her husbande, determyned bothe (for the better conveighe of their abhomynable lyfe) the death of the poore gentleman. Whereunto they added th'execucion with more then an ordynarye speede, for this villanous lawyer practised ymediatlie with a knave of hys owne disposicion; who, receivynge some ii or iij hundreth crownes wyth promysse of further rewarde, consented to performe the meanyng of his bloddye request, attendyng so diligentlye th'assistance of convenient tyme and place, that one mornyng he dogged the knighte; who, walkynge in the fatall pathe of hys mysfortune to a warreine of conies, a good distance from hys castell, was soddeinelye invaded by the hyered ennemye to hys lyfe, with one other of equal intent; who had no soner performed their cursed charge on the unhappie gentleman, but they retired in suche secrett

The knighte slaine by the traison of hys wyff.

manner to the place where the morder was firste conspired, that they were unseene of everie one, and their doynges knowen to no man. By which meanes they were neither taken, and much lesse douted for any suche offence: neyther wolde any have entred into suspicion either against the ladie or her proccurer Tolonio, considering bothe their former credit with th'innocent now dead, and also their present sleighte in coollorynge their late detestable traison. For the dead knyght was no sooner discovered by certeine passengers that waye by chaunce, but the counterfaite ymage his wyfe (fayning a necligent care and desperacion of herselfe) falleth without respecte upon the disfigured and bleedinge bodye of her husbande, rentynge her haire and garmentes, wateringe his dead face with a whole river of fained teares, and, as one thoroulye instructed afore in the office of th'ypocrite, forgat no sorte of feminine cryes; sometyme wrynging her handes, wyth a dollorous regarde to his dead bodye, kissyng every parte of hys senceles ghost, and preferryng sometime a soddaine scilence, forced (as it were) by her passion of secret sorowe, retired at last to a broken voice, with open exclamacion against the dolefull chaunce in this sorte:—

The ladye fayneth a sorow for the death of her husband.

'Ah, infortunate gentleman! to whose vertuouse lyfe thy destenies have don manifest wronge in takynge the awaye amyd the solace of thy olde yeares, wyth abridgement of the reste and reapose exspected in age, and that by a traine of mortall and bloddye treason. Wherein appeares th'iniquitye of the fates, yf not, that in wreakynge theyr malyce of the innocent, they dispence wyth the villenie of thowsandes more worthye of death then he that heare hath payed an untimelye tribute to the fatall executioner? That I woulde to God I mighte participate wyth hys fortune in embracyng in the grave the ghoaste of him whose remembrance wyll never loase harbor in th'intralls of my harte, tyll my bodye lye shryned within the sheete that shroodes his dismembred corps! Oh! cruell morderer! (who so ever thow art) what desolation am I brought unto by thy wyckednes? Howe many flooddes of teares will never ceasse hensfurth to gushe and distil upon the tombe of hym whom thou haste

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trayterouslye slayne? What toarches! what incense! what sacrifice! shall not ceasse to frye and burne, uppon the alter that covereth his guiltles boanes? Yea the blood whiche I meane to spill in revenge of his wronge shall accuse thy villenie, and witnes my loyall harte, in honorynge the shadowe of hym that is dead by seuer punishment of suche as committed the morder. Ah! deare harte?' (saith she), kissinge the disfigured carcasse of the knight, 'yf they had beene acquainted with thy bountye, thou hadst not tasted of their crueltie, or yf they had had but half the experience of thy curteyse inclinacion, as thou wast entierlye beloved of all suche as knewe the perfectly, they had sewerlye refrained from slaughter, and thou enjoyed styll the societie of thy carefull ladye, who, heare uppon her knees, advoweth a sharpp vengeance for the leaste dropp of blodd drayned out of thy bleedyng woundes, uppon as many as were eyther maisters or ministers in the morderyng enterprise; cravynge also (with the teares of a desolate wydow) that he that gave the mortal blowe have never power to escape the daunger of hym into whose handes God wyll put the sworde of revenge of th'affliction of suche as I am. Oh! children! why staye your teares in the miserie of your mother, and losse of so good a father? Who shall from hensfurth favor your tender yeres with further sustentation, or defend the weakenes of my widowhead agaynste the malice of the worlde? What support have wee lefte, seyng the chiefe pillor of oure house is perished by the wickednes of others?' Wherewith the doctor, havynge fylled all the contrey wyth hewe and crye to apprehende the traytours whom he lodged wythin his house, was at her elbowe or she wiste; and, joyeng not a lytle in her artificiall skill in playinge that part of the tragedye whereof hymselfe performed the firste acte, began to persuade her to consolation, and (not wythout th'assistaunce of some suborned teares) willed her not to sorowe for that whyche coulde not be recovered. 'For' (saith he) 'seinge God hathe touched your husbande with the messenger of hys wyll, wee oughte not to resiste the judgement of the highest, and muche lesse argue againste the determinacion of the heavens: neyther is there vertue in teares or com-

Death the messenger of the will of God.

plaintes to raise upp hym that sleepeth in his fatall mowlde. The beste is to expose frutes of patience and bee thankefull to His goodnes, who, by the example of this affliction, warneth you and all the worlde of his royal power over all estates; wyth a redye indevor in your selfe to manifest your dutye to hym that is dead, in the persecution of suche as shalbe founde guiltye in the cause of your present heavines. Neyther let the viewe of his mangled carkasse restore you to encrease of dollor, seing that, as the earth chalengeth his boanes as firste framed out of her bellye and intralls, so I wishe you to give order for his buryall in sorte appertayning to his estat.' Whereof the effect and expedicion followed accordynglye, not without the greate sorowe of his subjects, who also greeved in equall sorte on the behalfe of their ladye; who, showing th' uttermost of her connyng in craftie paintynge in the funerall hower, coulde not bee holden from fallynge into the grave, whiche she watered on every syde wyth the teares of her eyes, cravynge that she mighte make a sepulchre in her owne brest, to shryne the bodye of her husbande, or at leaste that it mighte be lawfull to boorne his boanes, to th' ende she mighte consume by peacemeale in drinkynge the ashes, as Artomesia did the skorched reliques and cendres of her deare Mansoll. Ah! deceite and develish hypocrisye of a woman! What enchauntement so strongelye made of whome thy subteltie can not undo the charme? What armour of suche force that is not founde to weake to resiste the strengthe of thy malice? What medecine of suche vertue whiche can prevaile above thy infection? What traine? What traison? What mischiefe or morderynge crueltie is hable to compare wyth the villenie of a woman unhappely devested of th' attire of reason and vertue, whiche for the moste parte are, or oughte to bee, moste familiar with that secte? Wherin appeareth an evident prooffe of the venemous pollicie in a woman, yf the outward aparance of an extreme sorow (the harte rejoysinge with treble contentement within) do not declare her deceitful disposicion? What hipocrisie is greater then to suborne al sortes of teares in the eyes, wyth every other signe of counterfeyte dule in the face, when the ynner partes,

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laughyng at suche fained showes, are in the myddest of theyr banquet for pleasure? What offence is it to plage theim in earnest, who seke to blaire the eyes of all the worlde wyth charmes of painted substance? Or rather, why shoulde they bee suffred to lyve whose villanous lyves and doynges were hable to deface the glory of the whole feminyne secte, yf the vertue of so manye chaste ladyes were not of force to aunswere the combat of all synister reproche, and conquer the infamous chalengers of theyr renowme?

But now, the funeralls performed to the deade Lorde of Chabrye, the ladye, albeit she dismissed by lytle and lytle the greatnes of her dollor, yet she ceassed not her diligence in the searche of the morderer, nor forgat to promisse large hyer to suche as coulde bringe her the ministers of the fact. There was publike informacion and secrett inquirye, wyth every point and circumstance so syfted to the quicke, that there lackte nothyng but the confession of him that was dead, whiche was impossible to bee had, or the testimonye of the bloddie parties, whiche were the commissioners appointed to enquire of the morder; whose handes smelled of the bloud of the dead innocent. Whereuppon the matter was hushte for a tyme. In whiche Tolonio was not ydle to ransicke every secret corner in the house, not forgettynge (I thynke) to visytt the treasore he chiefely affected, and for a simple pleasure of the whiche he had bene so prodigall of his conscience; who, yet not satisfyed with the sacrifize of innocent lyfe, stirred up desyer of greater synne. For this tyrannouse wyddow had iiij sonnes, whereof as ii of theim were continually in the house, so the eldest, jalowse (not without cause) of the famyliaritye betwene his mother and her doctor—whose haunte he judged to excede the compasse of his commission and lymittes of honor—colde not so conceile nor disgeste the conceite of that whiche persuaded a staine of infamye in the forheade or forefronte of his house, but that he thought to belonge to his dutie to ymparte unto her the cause of his suspicion, with perswacion (in humble sorte) to be indiffrently carefull to kepe her former glorie of vertuous life, and curious to defend the remeindor of her yeres from worthie cryme, or spot of foule

ymputacion. Wherein th' increase of amarus glee betwene the advocat and her procured a more expedicion then he thought; so that, having one day th' assistance of a fyt time and place, in a gallerie voide of all company, he preferred hys opinion in this sorte, not wythout an indiffrent medley of shame and disdaine appearing in all partes of his face:—'If it bee a thinge unseamly that a kinge shoulde be disobeyed of his subjects, it is no lesse necessarie, in myne opynion, that the prince avoyde oppression of his people by power; for that a greate falte in the one is none offence at all by reason of his authoritie, and the other sometime is exacted without juste cause of blame. But if it bee a vertue in the majestie royall to be indiffrent betwene the force of his power, geven hym by God, and the compleintes of righte in his vassals, why shoulde it be an offence, that the maister or magistrate bee put in remembrance or made t' understande the pointes wherin hee offendeth; seing he hath no greater reason to yelde justice to such as deserve punishmente, then bounde in doble sort to a wonderful care of integretie in lyving in himselfe, so as hys authoritie and effectes of upright conversacion may serve (as a lyne) to lead the meaner sort (serving under his awe) to be in love with his vertues and commended for semblable sinceretie and purytie of lyfe? But, for my parte (good madame), were it not the remorse of an equall respect to your reputacion and honor to al our house, and that my conscience hereafter wold accuse me of want of corage and care to make good the vertuous renowme of my dead father, I should hardely be forced to the tearmes of my present intent, nor my beyng in thys place geve you such cause of amaze and doubte of my meaninge. For the dutie whiche nature bindeth me to owe to the place you hold on my behalf, and the law of obedience geven by God to all chyldren towardes suche as made theyme the members of this worlde, makes me as often cloase my mouthe againste the discoverie of the longe grudge of my mynde, as I have greate reason to ympart the cause to your ladishipp; who is tooched more neare then any other, that I wolde to God the thinge, wherof my mynde hath geven a judgement of assurance, were as untrue as I wishe yt bothe farre from myne opynion

The eldeste sonne chargeth his mother with incestuose life with Tolonyo.

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and voyde of a trothe. Then sewerlye sholde my hart rest, discharged of disquiett, and I dismyssed from th'office of an oratour; whiche also I wolde refuce to performe if th'ymportance of the cause did not force my wil in that respect. Albeit, as the passions of the mynde bee free, and the sprite of man (howe so ever the bodie bee distressed with captivitie) hathe a pryvyledge of libertie touchyng opynyons or conceites, so I hope your wisdome, with the justice of my cause and clearenes of entent, are sufficient pillours too supporte that, whiche the vertue of naturall zeale to your selfe and dutifull regarde to the honour of my auncestors moves me to communicate with you; chieflye for that the best badge of your owne life, and bloodd of your late lorde and husbande, my father, bee distressed (as I am perswaded) by the secret haunte and unsemelie glee of favour betwene the proccurer Tolonio and you, whome God and nature have made a mother of suche children that neyther deserve suche lewde abuse in you, nor can brooke his villany in corruptyng the noble blood wherewith they participate, without vengance due to the greatnes of his poysoned malice. Wherein, good madame, as my deare affection to you wardes, hathe made me so franke in warnyng you of the evill, so, yf you give not order hensfurthe for the redresse of that whiche I accompte alredie past everye cause of dowte, you will come too shorte to cover that can bee no longer conceiled; when also small compassion wilbee used in the revenge of th'injurye. Neyther can you in any sort complaine rightelie of me, in whose harte is alredye kindled a grudge of the wronge you have don to the nobilitie of us al, loathing with all the simple remembrance of so foule a falte; protesting unto you for ende, that, yf herafter you become as careles of the honour of your children, as heretofore you have bene voiede of regarde to your owne reputation, the worlde shall punishe the abuse of your olde yeres with open exclamation against your lascivius order of lyfe, devesting you of all titles of highe degree; and thies handes onely shall sende maister doctor to visytt his processe in th'infernall senatt, and preache in other pulpitt then the hyghest theatrye within the castell of Chambrye.' Whiche laste threates argued a

Honor.

more mortalitie, by his terrible regardes of countenance, with broken wordes in his mouthe, declaring sufficientlie the vehemencie of his passion. All which as they perswaded the ladie to dread a spedie execucion of his anger (wherin her Tolonyo shold bee chieflie distressed), so, being voied of remedie in any feare shee cold preferr, she retired to the pollecie of femenine complaintes, sekyng to moderate the furye of his juste collor by certeine suborned teares, and other dissembled argumentes of dollor, wherwith shee seamed to fil eche synowe and vaine about her, continuing some space in that sorowful contemplacion, with her face uppon the grounde, castynge duste and ashes uppon her head (accordinge to the desperat Persyans, when they received any lamentable newes) and rysinge at laste (as oute of a qualme of heavye passions) replied to th' exclamacion of her son with thies, or such like, tearmes of counterfaite compassion:

She replyeth to her sonne.

—'Were yt not that ynnocencie is a vertue sufficient of itselfe to aunswere all combats of unjust ymputacion, I should sewer doubte of assystance in the defence of my cause, and muche lesse bee hable too cleare the sentence of your synister conceite against me. Neyther had I reason to argue with you, and lesse cause to enter into tearmes to justyfye my selfe, yf in myne owne integretie appeared not th' absolute wronge you do to my present honor. And yet do I feele my selfe indiffrentlye passioned betwene doute and feare; for that your present coller, quarrelyng with al offers of defence on my syde, seameth also curious to admitt any creditt at all in whatsoever I shall preferr to approve my guilteles lyfe. For yf yt bee a vertue to bee credulus in every reapport, you have reason to continue your grudge, or yf the viewe of your owne eye had broughte you to the sighte of that wherein you presume a trothe but by ymaginacion, you were suffycientlye absolved yf you hadd alredie performed the ende of your mortall enterprise; but where your eyes argue agaynste you (as partakers at no tyme of the liklyhodd of any suche evill you have presently ymagined) and your selfe, voied of other witnes then th' informacion of your owne pertiall conceite, let straungers be judges betwene the causes of your suspicion and the hard sentence you have

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passed of myne honor, and all the worlde that was pryvie to the course of my youthe (when you were under the yoke and yeres of discrecion) accuse the wronge you doo to the vertue of myne age, whose hoarie haires crye out of your present crueltie. Alas! what is he that dare undertake the defence of this desolate widowe, yf myne owne children seeke to set abroache my dishonnor? What state or degre may bee boolde to reappose creditt with assurance in myne honestie, when the frute, congealed of the substance of my selfe, seameth dowtefull of my uprighte dealinge? What expectacion of faithe, loyaltie, or good opynion, is in anye sorte of straungers, when the blood and blossomes of our owne intralls enter into conspiracie againste us? Oh! miserable condicion, and unhappie secte of ours! subject moste (as yt seameth) to straunge wretchednes, when wee accompte oure selves paste the feare and malice of Fortune; who, now I see, beginneth her troblesome warr, when wee reappose moste felicitie and assurance in reste? Yt is nowe alas! that I fynde an experience of the common voice of the vulgare sorte, confirmed also by consent of th' auncient crewe of the learned, that vertue is contynuallie assailed with spite, envie, and false ymposicion of crymes. Neyther am I alone persecuted with the malice of all those myschieves, althoughe I onlye am oppressed with a present villanie, whereof I never thoughte, and muche lesse performed, any effect. How longe, alas! (my sonne) have you joyned in opynion with that fonde secte, whose rashenes in judgement hathe made theme oftentimes repente the sentence of their follie? Synce when have you bene so lightly perswaded of the reputacion, constancie and vertue of dames of honor? Do you measure their disposicion by the vanitie in yourselfe, and villanie of suche as creditt only th' instinct of their malicious braine? No! no! yt is not th' indevor of ladyes of my regarde to practise in sensualitie, nor study in the vaine delites of the fleshe. And, for my part, me thinkes discrecion shold perswade you that the time and nomber of my yeres are not convenient to the follies whereof I felte no mocion in the veraye flame and burninge sommer of my youthe. You greve with the famyliaritie betwene Tolonyo and me, but chieflye because

Vertue is continualie assailed with envye and spite.

we use conference now and then in my chamber. Do not you knowe yt is he by whose counsell are guyded the whole affaires of the house; or do you see his libertie enlarged since the deathe of your father, in whose time he practised in sorte as he doth nowe, and yet was he never jeleouse of his accesse hether at any hower? Had he not eyes to discerne as farr of as you, and his eares weare as open to al reapportes as yours? Albeit he used discrecion in judgement: neyther colde his harte (I am sewer) disgeste halfe the villenie you have alledged yf hys sormise hadd bene confirmed with a trothe. But here, alas! appere the pointes of my wretchednes, to fall into the daunger of suspicion wyth hym in whom I have reaposed the quiet of my olde yeres, and for th' increase of whose welth and patrymonie I am in contynuall traveile, bothe of mynde and bodye. Wherein as the poore Tolonyo (no lesse infortunate then I, for that your grudge seameth moste haynous on his behalfe) hathe equall care to advance you by hys advise and travelle; so, besides your abuse to me, whom God and nature bindes you to honor with all dutie, you do doble wronge to hys faith and zeleus intent towardes you, in retornynge hys honest care with threates of no lesse mortalitie then shamefull and cruell deathe: whyche, yf yt come in question by your rashnes, what dowte brynge you of hys honestye, where nowe hys name is of credytt with the beste of the contreye? And, for hys part, yf you give hym the leaste ynkling in the worlde of your displeasure, I warrante you hys presence shall no more offende you in the house nor elswhere, and then shall you knowe whether the favour hee fyndes at my handes ymportes a meanyng for your proffit, or to satisfye the pleasure of my vile and aged fleshe: besides, the order of your affaires, bothe at hoame and in the senatt, will trye the diffrence betwene the commoditie of his presence, and hyndrance that is sewer too happen by hys restrainte of cominge hether. When (my sonne) will also appere the care of youre deare mother; whose diligence alas! deserveth better consideracion then to bee charged wyth the note of incontynencie, whyche I proteste affore God, wyth stretched handes and harte to the heavens, to have in no lesse contempte

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for the vilenes of the synne, then I see the wrongefull conceyte of suche a villenie dothe troble you.' Whyche shee forgatt not too accompanye with all sortes of syghes and sygnes of dollour, entrermedled with suche regardes of dyssembled pitie in all partes of her face, that, albeyt he was paste all dowte, touchyng the trothe of hys owne conceyte, yet the teares of hys deceytefull mother moved hym to admitt her excuses, with suche compassion of her sorowe that he seamed also to passe the panges of her present passion; with protestacion, under tearmes of greate humilitie, that he greved no lesse in that he hadde sayd, then shee hadd greate reason to complaine of the wronge he hadd donne to the renowne of her vertue. 'Albeyt,' saythe he (wyth a countenance of repentance) 'yf you measure the force of my affection with the cause of my late plaines, your discrecion I hope will conster my woordes accordyng to the honeste intent of my harte, with excuse to my rashenes; whyche you shall see hereafter so mortefyed in me that I will neyther bee so hastye to accuse, nor suspect without better advise.' For the whyche shee seamed thankefull unto hym, with a present appeasement from anger, attendyng the offer of oportunitie when she myghte preferr her sonne to a parte in the tragedye whyche her wickednes hadde alredye begon uppon hys late father; for shee was doutefull styll of the younge man, and gave lesse faythe to his wordes.

Wherein certeinely appeareth an experience of an ordinarie custume in the wicked, who payseth th' infydelitie of others in the ballance of their owne injustice and wante of faithe. For the tyrant dowteth to whose creditt to comitt the savetie of himselfe, because his crueltie is hated of all men; neyther dothe he good to any, yf not for the respect of profit, or to performe some malicius attempte. Wherein, as they consider th' affecions of their people by the passions in theimselves, soo, in passynge theyr owne lyfe in continuall feare, they procure lyke terror to suche as bee conversant with theim, makyng the disquiett of others equall to the miserie of theim selves. Lyke as thys new Megera, or tyrannouse monster of oure tyme; who, no more satisfied with the blood of her husband then glutted or cloyed with the continual

pleasures in whoredome with her detestable Tolonyo, determined to rydd the world of her innocent sonne, to th'end their villanous trade mighte passe with more assurance and less cause of feare or suspicion of any. For th'execution wherof her wickednes devised this spedye and necessarie meane. There was within the castel a highe gallery, borded underfote with certeine plankes, fastened to rotten planchers: whereas the young gentleman used his dailye recreacion in walkinge, by reason of the delitefull ayre and pleasant prospect uppon dyverse feldes and gardyns, so the tygresse his mother reserved that place as a most chiefe and mortal minister in the death of her son. For she and her pernicius proccurer, one evenyng, knocked oute of either ende of diverse of the plankes the nayles that kepte theime cloase to the plancher; in suche sorte that the nexte that happened too make hys walke there shoulde have no leasure to discover the traison, and much lesse lyve to bring reapport of the hardnes of the rockes growing in the diches under the sayd gallerie. Which chaunced unhappelie to the sonne of this she-wolffe; who, no more happie in a mother then his father fortunate in a wife, renewed the next day his accustumed walkes in the valte, wher he had not spent thre or foure tornes but his destynie brought hym to treade uppon the fatall bourdes; who, havinge no holde nor staye to rest upon, disjoyned theimselves wyth the wayght of th'infortunat gentleman, who, falling soddeinly upon the rockes, wyth hys heade forwarde, was brused to peces, beinge dead indede almost so sone as he felte th'apprehencion of death. Who wold have judged such trayson in a mother to work such an end to her son; or noted such wante of pitie in any of the sect as to see the seedes, sprong in her owne flankes, deformed and hewed in peces upon the edge of sharppe and piked stoanes? What misfortune to the sonne, and villanie in a mother, seinge the title of a sonne oughte to be so deare, and name of a mother is so delicate and of such vertue that no hart, of what mettal soever it be made, is not mollefyed and doth homage to that dignitie! Yea everye one holdeth his blodde so deare that the beastes theimselves, by a provocacion of nature (although other wayes insensible) have such

Her eldest sonne slaine by treason.

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affectioned regarde to their fawnes, that they feare not to contend against every peril of death to defend their young ons from daunger. What greater felicity hath man, travelling in the stormy sea of this worlde, then to see (as it were) a regeneracion of hymselfe in hys children, wyth a plentifull and gladsome encrease of his seede? For whych cause, chiefely, God ordeyned the holye institucion of mariage, not respecting altogether the mortefyeng of the ticklishe instinctes of our declyning fleshe, but rather of regarde (as th' appostel affirmeth) to kepe the societie of man in order, making it appeare pure and acceptable to the great monarke, and fyrst founder of so noble a worke. But to retorne now to our historie. This ympp of th' infernall lake, and hellish lady, beinge already dispoyled of all affection and dutie required in a woman towardes her husband, detested, also, every point of charitie and zeale whych nature chalenged in her to the frute flowered wythin the tender partes of her intralls, whose fall and miserable deathe as you see filled ymediatlie everie corner of the castel with desolacion and teares: some weping in the wante of their brother; other complayned the lacke and misfortune of ther kynsman, the viewe of whose dysmembred bodye sturred up also a freshe sorowe on the behalfe of their late lorde; but all their dollor was nothing to the howlinge and cries of the detestable mordress, who entermedled her greffe, wyth such argumentes of desperacion, that her sorowe seamed sufficient to make the earth tremble, and move the heavens to teares; neyther seamed she to make other accompte of the world then a place of most loathsome abode. By whych masqued semblance of outwarde heavines, she covered an inward joye at her hart, and by this pollecie of painted dule she blaired the eyes of the simple multitude; who, after the retire of the heate of theyr lamemtable stormes, consulted uppon the buyrial, wyth general consent, in the ende, that th' innocent striplinge should be laiede in the tombe of his infortunate father, to th' end he might participat with hym in the fatal pitt, as he was equal to hym touching the malice of his mother.

And now, as this bloddie lady had in this sort discharged

(as she thought) every doubt and feare hereafter—chiefly for that she stoode no more in awe of any censor, or spie to kepe a kalender of her faltes, wherby she used lesse care in the conveigh of her beastly traffique wyth her viperus advocat—so, notwythstanding, her seconde sonne, grudginge still in the deathe of hys brother, and some what doubtful of the cause, began to be jeleouse in the pointes of his mislike; and, beinge of equal corage to his brother, and of no lesse nobilitye in hart, cold not also disgest the view of dishonour, specially in the highest degree of hys house and affynitie. Whereof he gave declaracion in his sterne countenances to Tolonyo, to whome yf he spake at times by any occasion, his wordes argued the disdayne in his hart, using unhappelie the lyke regardes and tearmes to his mother, who, not liking to have any tutor to note or controll her villanie, and hardned withall in th' execution of fleshe and life, judged it no offence to embrue her handes with the blod of this innocente, and paint every post and posterne of her castel with the braines of her posteritie, resolving ymediatly uppon the fatall conspiracie agaynst her second sonne, swearinge his death with her execrable mynister Tolonyo, who under toke the charge with promise to performe th' effect. Wherin he used the meane and expedicion by hym who first distressed the father. For this reverende lawyer, rather studied in the philosophie of Sathan, then traded in the skill of th' ordynances of kynges and emprours, or experienced in matters belonginge to the senat, so conjured the morderer wyth perswacions and proffers of rewarde, that he admitted the bargayne and gave assurance of the consommacion. Wherin he failed not of any point or article. For certeine dayes after, the gentleman, being on huntinge uppon certayne mountaines envyronning a hollow and lowe valleye, as his men were buysye in rewarding their howndes wyth the pawnche and intrals of certeine chasses they had killed, their unfortunate maister reapposed hymselfe uppon the edge of a steape and high hill, whose discent ymported a perillous regard, by the deepe and hollow vaulte in the valleye, replenished on every side with sharppe and hideous rockes. Here, as he accompted

Yt is easye to corrupt him which is evil of himselfe.

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hymselfe most sewer, and furthest from cause or effect of traison, hee founde greatest daunger wyth stroake of mortall destruction; for that the hyerd mynister of his death, tracing his steppes all the daye to fynde an occasion fyt to further the ende of hys buysynes, refused not th' offer of so convenient a meane and place. For as they were in familiar devise together, the one dreadinge no harme, and the other attending th' assistance of the devil to performe his wickednes, stept of a soddaine behinde, and thrust the unhappie gentleman from the top of the mountaine to the bottom of the valleye, where the sharp rockes, receyving him wythout respect of hys innocencie, made morsels of hys guiltles carkasse.

Her seconde sonne slaine by her wickednes.

What difference may a man set betwene the desolacion of thys house and myserie of the succession of Atreus the Greeke, whose children were cruelly cut in peces? The wyfe of one of theym surviving, a noted woman of all the world for incestious lyfe, becomes in the ende the mordresse of her husband, by th' assistance of th' adulteror and defyler of their mariage bed; and she wyth her rybaud, oppressed at last wyth vengance equal to their offence, by the handes of her owne sonne. What pytie is it to see an experience of such examples amongest Christians, and in this age, yea in the place and contry where the regarde of parentes towards their children is suche that they make no conscience to hazarde their owne lyves to defende the health of suche as nature hathe geven theym for succession; where this execrable ympp of infernall procreacion, borne for the skourge and plage of her posteritie, respecting more to conceile and aggravat her wickednes then careful any way to repent her synnes, delited (as it seamed) to sprinkle the earth wyth innocent blod, whych cryed vengance both against her and her companion of these horryble morders; according to the judgement of the great God, who, keping a true reckoning of every drop of blod that hath ben spilt, since the deathe of Abell the just until the last affliction of as many as hath bene, or shalbe, unjustlie persecuted, punished, or mordered, by the malice of the wicked, provideth commonly that such acts of detestacion receive end by the discoverie of the life passed of such infamous

wretches! Wherof, behold an experience in this cursed lady! Who, after the funerals of her yonger son, seing that al her servants kept eye and watche upon her with suspicion of her vicious dealing, ymparted the whole to the galland her minion, who consulted and concluded ymedyatly the end of their pleasures and exercises of blodd together; whiche was to marye one an other. Wherein albeit appeared a diffycultye, for that Tollonyo hadde alredy a wyfe no lesse wise, faire, and vertuous, then he cruell, spitefull, and vicious, yet it seamed not ympossible, for that the wicked man accompteth a facilytie in everye thynge whych he estemeth eyther reasonable or lawfull. He determyned, at what price soever it wer, to make her plaie a fourth parte in the former tragedie of the father and his ii sonnes; ympartinge his bloddie resolucion to his beastlye trooll, who, no lesse assured in such evill then ready to make a mynister in th'attempt (as the common villeine that sturreth not from the straites of mounteynes, stripping every passenger not hable to resyste his force) allowed the devise wyth speciall request of expedicion in th'accomplishment. Al whiche, it is to be thought, the covetus doctor did not devise wyth intent to performe for the respecte altogether of love or frendshipp he bare to her whom he goeth nowe abowte to marye: for he considereth that men, for the moste part, embrase traitors, to make their proffyt of their inventions and subtelties; which, when they have wrested frome them, eyther the traitors bee punished by death, or at leaste so disdained that their miserye in lyvinge showeth th'undowted difference betwene vertue and vice, disposicion of an infidell, or one that estemeth not his fayth, and he that is carefull to kepe his conscience cleare from suche spott: so Tolonyo, not ignorant of the large revenue and great summes of moneye of the Ladye of Chabrye, wyth store of other welthe about the castel, accompted it a commoditie to exchaunge the lyfe of hys wyfe for the fylthie use of so greate riches; meaning, notwythstanding, to enjoye the spoiles of so plentifull a praye, and after to sende her packinge and make her passe by the pathe of so manye morders committed both by the one and th'other. Oh! unbridled

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covetousnes, and execrable desyer of unhonest gaine! Howe haste thou blaired the eyes and understandynge of men nowe a dayes, hardning their hartes agaynst the dread of God and feare of his lawes! What mischiefe hath overwhelmed us by thy meanes; seing the father is jelowse of the faythe of hys sonne, the wyfe doubtfull of her husband, the neighbour fearyng ambushes of treason in his nexte companion, and the prince, often tymes in daunger of his savetye, beinge besett on every syde with the gard and ministers of money; whiche hath suche force over the fragilitie of men, that some time the servant conspireth against his lord to enriche himself with the spoiles of his maister; the sonne grudgeth in the long lyfe of hys father, because he kepes hym from th' use of his possession; and some we see procureth the death of hym for whose lyf and preservation of health he ought to be in continuall prayer. Neyther doth the malyce of that wickednes reste altogether in the hartes of the temporal, but ther be also of the sacred sorte infected with the poyson of that venemous worme; who, the more she groweth in strength and force, the greater miserye do wee feele, that unhappy is that worlde whiche participateth with so hurtefull an ayre. Wherin, if this abhominable desyer of gaine have power to disolve that wherein God hath forbidden a separacion by man, and nature bounde us to an equal care and zeale as to our selves, I see not what waye we maye take to fynde assurance of fayth and loyaltye; nor under what clymat maye bee founde any whiche imitate the simplicitie of our auncestors; seing the malice of our age excedeth (in that respect chiefelye) all corruption that ever hath bene noted amongest the most infydelles and cruell barbaryans that eyther lyve nowe, or have bene in any time afore.

And so to our morderinge Tolonyo, who, buildyng a thousand castels in the ayre upon the complott made for the despatche of his wyf, was not hable to resolve uppon any certeine meane touching th' execution. For seaminge (as they saye) to holde the swyne by the eare, he was loath to let her go, and doubtefull whiche waye to kepe her wythout daunger to himself. Som time he was of opinion to worke the fatal

meane by poyson: wherein appeared absolute perill, for that himselfe was ignorant in bruinge the confection, and the assistaunce of an appoticarie was denied, in that he dreaded a discoverye in impartinge the misterye to a straunger. He practised wyth hym who (as you have harde) served his torne in the slaughter of the father and sonnes: wherein albeit he was deceived, and the destynie of his wyf rather deferred then her punishment forgiven, yet the daye of her fatall date seamed to approche. For that, as he half despaired in the fidelity of his former executioner, touchinge this thirde attempte of blode (wherein, also, appeared a difficultie in the acte, for that the chaste ladye sturred not muche out of her house) so, reaposinge muche for himselfe in th'assistaunce of the sprite that guided his entent, he abandoned the ayde of any man, and committed the effect and circumstance to his owne handes; by whom was performed the fatall consomation, the nighte folowing his conference with the hyered traytour, when he strangled her in bede, wyth a napking of thin hollande wounde faste about her necke. And as she was in the extremetye of her laste pange, he cryed for helpe, advouchyng with a troubled countenaunce (to the servantes that came to the reskowe of their dead mystrys) that it was the soddain fall of a cold rewme, with superfluitye of fleame, that had forced this mortall suffocacion in his wife. Whyche was easelye beleved of his men, and had so stayed wythout further inquiry of the case, if God had not awaked with the noyse of the crye the aged man her father, who the same night sopped wyth his doughter, and lefte her in as good estate as she was ever afore. In whome the consent of the destynies of Tolonyo, and the justice of the highest, seamed of indifferent operacion in the viewe of his tragedie; for that, notwithstandynge his teares and sorowe, he gave diligent regarde to the face and throate of his doughter; wherof the one was swelled and pooffed upp wyth blacke blood, and in the other appeared a circle or print of the thing that wrought th'effect of her death. Wheruppon folowed a secret judgement in himselfe that she was distressed by mortall violence, and the defluxion that smothered and stopped the conduites of her breath, were the handes of her

The devill.

Tolonyo killeth his wife.

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husbande, or some other by his appointement. Wherein, notwithstandyng, he was so constant in dissimulynge his opynion for the present, that he forbare, as then, to gyve any show of his grudge, attendyng a more fytt tyme and oportunitye for the revenge of so greate a villenie, and that to the terrour and example of all ages, touchynge suche haynous abuses to theyr honeste wyves. Whereuppon, willynge his sonne in lawe to consider of the obsequies accordynge to the meritt of bothe theyr houses, he sayed he woulde go procure the companye of diverse their frendes in the citie, for the more pompp and better furniture of the funerall. Wherein as the advocat buysyed himselfe to provide everye ceremonye and circumstance due to the buyrieng of the dead, with more joye (I am sewer) in the acte he had don then repentance for the synne; so the olde man his father in lawe, converted into heavynes wyth juste occasion of revenge, complaineth hym to the judge cryminall of the place, with requeste to comme viewe the moste detestable parte which ever earst hath bene parformed by any; 'and whereof' (sayth he), with a nomber of aged teares watteryng his hoarye bearde, 'you wil have compassion, yf you be not as farr from the gifte of pitie as the Athenyan Tymon, who, for his disposicion of crueltye, was called the common ennemy to the curtesye of man.' Whereunto the magistrate consented, as wel by the dutye of his othe at his first election, as desyer to beholde wyth his eyes the cause of the olde mans complaint, whome he folowed (with his nomber of sergeantes and officers at armes appertaynyng) to the house of Tolonyo. Where, yf he marveiled with the viewe of the dead bodye, and disorder in doinge the acte, he was moved to double amaze wyth the dollour of the olde man uttered in these tearmes:—'Yf the viewe of straunge and horrible thynges move cause of wounder to the rude and barbarous sorte; or experience of undoubted extremities have power to procure remorce in the hartes of suche as participate wyth the gyfte of pytie and pure religion, I commend unto you (syr) the miserie of my olde yeres, wepinge in the wronge of my late doughter, whose ghoaste you maye heare crye oute for revenge of his wretchednes that forced her lyfe to suche

His father in lawe complaineth to the judge criminall.

mortall vyolacion. And albeyt the tearmes of my complaint may at the first seame to ymport a doute of the truthe, and skarce meritorius of compassion, yet, in th' indifferent viewe and consideracion of the matter, will appeare the justice of my cause, and iniquitie of hym that hathe so mortallye wounded my harte, that I feare yt is also of force to comitt me to deadlye execucion. Whereof I rather wyshe to have made a former proff, then to stande heare to lament the dollorus tragedie of my doughter, whom (sir) I saye, and protest with wringing handes, to be trayterously strangeled in her sleepe by this detestable morderor, my sonne in lawe. Behold! (sir) how the signes and markes of morder do advouche his villenie; and witnes the extreme panges she endured affore he hadd wrought the full force of his execrable acte. Besides the whole housholde are to justefye her state of perfecte healthe in the begynnyng of the evenynge, when shee wente to bedd to hym, whyche, with other circunstance, argue, alas! an undouted trothe in th' effect; neyther hadd shee other rhume, catarre, or disease, then the violant handes of her husbande, who, bothe brued the broth and ministred the cupp of suffocacion to my deare doughter. On whose behalfe, beholde! the teares of pitie in my withered face; whyche shall never bee drye, nor cease to distill, till the sworde of your justice (sir) have given the blowe of revenge to her wronge, and desolacion of me her wretched father. Staie not (sir) to take awaye a contynuall calamitie in my house, and purge the whole contrey of an infection of generall slaunder in the crueltie of thys husbande, more barbarus towardes hys chaste wyfe then the tyrannye of the tygresse or she-wolf on the behalfe of theyr mates or youngeons. Perswade your selfe, alas! that God ys readye with the reward of your acte in hys hande yf you doo reason too thys oppression. Where, yf you refuce too yelde justice too my ryghtefulle requeste, beholde! howe the heavens discloase themselves too raine the shower of vengance uppon you and your posteritie! Neyther had thies handes refrained so longe the dismembringe of his cursed partes, yf the vertue in your othe and office hadde not beene my warrante to have justice by you.' Whereuppon followed suche sighes and passions of

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sorowe that they prevailed above the force of further speeche, moving the judge to such remorce on the behalfe of the morder, that, what with the scilence and other drowpinge argumentes of guiltie conscience in Tolonyo (who albeyt was an oratour of sufficient eloquence in the senatt, yet he made no one simple offer of confutacion to the olde mans complaint) and resolucion of phizicions who gave sentence againste hym, with judgement that her lyfe was forced to leave her by the maine strengthe of man, he caused the sergeantes to apprehende hym, sendinge hym furthewith to embrace the bottom of a dongeon, in place of his pretended mariage with the widowe of Chabrye, whom he thought to make *lieutenant* of his bede in the absence of his wyfe; whose corpse, the next daye, was layed in the place of publyke viewe, not without great dollor in every degree of men; who yf they cursed to the deepest pit in hel the author and minister in the death of so vertuouse a gentle woman, yt is no neede to move question of the general desolacion amongest the women, who, knowing her husband to be th' onlie worker of the villanie, grudged that he had the favor of an ymprisonement, with generall cryes to the senat to comit him to th' extremety of every torture without respect of compassion. The bodie was caried with funerall pomppe to the colledge churche there and layed in her tombe, with such sacrafyze and ceremonies of sorowe, that who hadd seene their order every waye, wold have thought yt hadd bene the obsequies of the common mother of their citie. In whiche meane while her father pursewed hys processe with suche diligence that the prisonner was hard; who, confessinge (without question) the circunstance and effecte of the morder, was sent (by reason of the horror and straungenes of the fact) to the courte of parlyament of Aix, affore whom the case was debated at large. Whiche beynge imparted to the Lady of Chabrye, who only was pryvie to her owne conscience, and knew her selfe guiltye of al, began to feare that whiche fel ymediatlie—I meane that Tolonyo wold as well discover their longe practise together in luste, whith the sondrie morders in her house, as he had willingelie confessed th' oppression of his wyfe. Whereuppon thinking yt sufficient to bee warned

by the threatninge of a storme of th' approche of a tempest, and withall that yt was a point of wisdome to prevent the mischiefe afore the evill dyd fall, gathered upp asmuche money as the shortnes of time wold give her leave to recover, with suche jewells as were of lyghte cariage, and trudged in soddaine and secret manner to the castel of Pogetto, belonging to the duchie of Scavoye; whilest the poore Tolonyo was pynyoned and trussed with coardes, and sente to the noble citie of Aix (whyche bare longe time the name of her founder called Sextius, a Romaine gentleman, and tearmed of the Latins (by reason of the baynes of hoate waters there) Aque Sextiæ): where he advouched eftesoones the pointes of his former confession, with the discoverie of his incesteouse trade with the Lady of Chabrye, the abhominable morders, th' occasions of the same, and the names of theim that assisted the blodye execucion. Wheruppon the sentence of that courte dysmyssed hym to La Grassa, to bee pinched with th' extremetie of every torture and racke appointed to torment offenders. From whence he was restored to the place of his natyvitie, where, beynge in pryson and knowinge what judgement the lawe had given of hys lyfe, began to acknowleadge his former abuses with teares and other argumentes of repentance, appealynge uppon hys knees to the majestie of the highest, with this lamentable invocacion:—

The ladye fleethe to Pogetto.

'The view of my former offences (oh heavenly father!) quarrellinge with my present remorce, perswades small hope of absolucion at thy handes, yf, in the benefytt of thy mercie, appeared not absolute assurance of the forgivenes of my sinnes. Neither doo I despaire in the vertue of my humble submission, consideryng thou haste affirmed (by the mouth of th' apostle) that no repentance can bee offred so late whyche thou wilte not thankefullye accepte, so that yt proceede of the humilitie of the spryte, and bee armed with true contricion of hart. And albeyt (oh mercifull God) the whole course of my wicked daies hetherto hathe passed, without either care of the comaundementes or feare of thy lawes; yet, seing yt is now thy pleasure to stopp the race of nature and fragilitie in me, yt maye also please the to putt me in the nomber of those to whome thou haste promised forgivenes of

Tolonyo repenteth, and praieth to God for forgivenes of his sinnes.

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their faltes, at what hower soever they mourne and lament their synnes. Suffer me (oh Lorde) to participate with the compfort of the theff hanginge on thy righte hande, who, albeit never acknowledged his wickednes till the last hower, yet his repentance was allowed of the; in that when he sayed "Lorde remember me when thow commest in thy kingdome," thou made hym a fellow cytysen with thy selfe in the joyefull paradise. And as thy bowntie and goodnes, excedethe the greatnes of any offence, so I beseche thee suffer thy mercie to wype away the wickednes of me moste miserable and wretched sinner, for the love of thy deare sonne my only saviour; whose bodye passed the tormentes of mortall affliction uppon the crosse to give lyfe to theim that were deade in synne, and blood sealed the articles of reconcilement and forgivenes of synners; amongest whome, as I confesse mine owne abhominacion to exceede the moste haynous offences that ever weare, so I humblye crave to bee absolved by the benefit of thy mercie, and that thowe forbeare to enter into judgement against my soule. Respect not (oh Lord) the nomber of my falts, for that they excede computacion, nor deale not with me according to the greatnes of the leaste of theime; for that (without th' assistance of thy speciall goodnes) hell is the rewarde and merite of my wycked lyfe. Whyche I wyshe maye worke a warnynge to all degrees of equal disposition to myselfe, that, although they feede for a time of a flatterynge pleasure, or favor of this worlde, yet seing theyr iniquityes in th' end are discovered by themselves, whereby they are sewer to receive (with me) the hyer of their evill by an infamous death, I wishe them stande in awe of th' infallible judgement, and praye wyth the prophet to participat in the general satisfaction whiche the death of his sonne hath made for all fleshe, fallen for want of grace in the fyrst man, whose faultes have bene alredie purified by the blodd of that most innocent lambe into whose handes I commend my penitent sprytt.' In th' ende of whiche prayer he was drawen out of the prison and ledd to the theatrie of publike execucion, where he received the reward of hys badd lyf, by a worthie death, to the speciall contentement of his father in lawe, and generall

Jere. xxxi.

Luke xxii.

Tolonyo executed.

joye of all the ladyes and gentlewomen of the countrey, excepte the miserable widowe of Chabrie, who, beinge adjorned and not appearyng, accordyngly was condemned, and executed by figure, accordynge to the custome in Fraunce in that behalfe. Whereof she was made to understande by som secret spye, who also warned her of the diligent inquisicion and meanes that were made to fynde her, to th' ende justice mighte pass uppon her. Whereuppon, doubtyng eyther assurance or savetye at Pogetto, went to Ieynes with one man only called Iacques Pallyero, who, some what jelouse of the comming awaye of his mystres, or rather fearinge in the ende to be partaker of the punishment of her wicked lyfe, made no conscience one daye, as she was in her devocions in the churche, to robb her of every part and parcel of her money and jewells, with other necessaryes, saving suche as she ware about her; which was such a corsaye of secret and frettynge grief for the time, that she was at point to admitt th' offer of dispaire. Albeit, beinge alredie entred into repentance, and judginge that misfortune of litle or no value in respect of th' infinit abuses of her former time, gave God thankes for his visitation, and entringe into devise for meanes to support the residue of her yeares, addressed her to an auncient widowe; to whom as she accomptes her present necessitye, proceding of the villanie of her man—without any mencion (I am sewer) of her detestable trade passed, or cause of her present beinge there—so she founde such favor in this matrone that, in respect of her showe of honest behaviour and gravitye, arguinge her discent from nobilitee, she committed unto her the governement and bringynge up of her doughters. In whiche trade she ended veraye porelye, albeit with more honor then she deserved, her unhappye dayes.

Here you see the miserie of this wretch, who earst hath commaunded over a howshould of servantes, and gentlewomen at her becke, is nowe brought to lyve under the awe of one inferiour to her house and calling; and who, passing her youth with all pompp and delicat norriture, and nowe drawinge to th' ende of her yeres, is forced to an experience of con-

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tinual exile, subject to the wil and pleasure of an other, and prest (as she did indeede) to dye out of her countrey, without the companye or compfort of any her frendes to cloase her eyes, or couche her boanes in other shryne or sepulchre, then by th' appointment of straungers. Wherein, certeinelye appeareth rightlye the infallible judgement of God, who, forsaken of suche as yelde honor to their proper desyers, suffreth theime also to fall in suche sorte, that in the ende they are constrained to confess their faultes, with detestation of their synne, when they feele his juste vengeance powred upon theim. Like as it happened to those miserable or rather morderyng lovers; whose ende, notwithstandyng, I accompte veray happie, seing they were not voyede of repentance in the last hower and moment of lyfe. And trulye he is sufficientlye blyssed, the eyes of whose minde, in the laste and fatall hower, bee not dymmed wyth the darknes of infidelitie and obstinate desperacion, seing it is upon the bodye and soules of suche that God thondereth the fyer of his anger, and flame of immortall furye. Beholde! heare, the ende of th' impudent love of these adulterers, the frutes of so detestable a tree, and the fortune of suche falsours of their promise and othes made in the face of the church. And heare you may see the commoditie that commonly attendes the villanie of suche as unjustlye spill the blood of their neighbour, seinge that God hath willed by his divine providence that tooth for toothe, and eye for eye, be taken from hym, who (wythout the consent of the lawe) offendeth his brother; in whom appeareth the livelye ymage of oure saviour, who hath also forbidden by speciall inhibicion the violacion of blood by morder, and every thought and effect of adulterie and whordome, but chieflye the unhonest embracinge of the wyfe of our neighbour, who, once united with the bodie of her husbande (whereby of ij moyties are made one whole and entyer hart) dothe abuse and dishonnor the bonde of their sacred league, yf she but wishe, and muche more enjoye, the companye of any other in unlawfull sorte.

DISCOURSE
X

LUCHYN is LONGE in LOVE wyth a Simple Mayde, whom he woeth and cannot wyn by any passion hee endureth. At last necessitie yeldeth her into his handes; when he doth not onlye refuse to abuse her body, but also takes order to susteine her and supplie her wantes, no lesse amplie then if shee had bene his syster.

DISCOURSE X

THE ARGUMENT

Amongest all the passions which nature sturreth up to disquiet the mind of man, there is none of such tyrany or kepes us more in awe then the detestable humor of covetousnes, and raging appetyt of whoredome. Wherof as both the one and the other engender frutes of semblable furie, and expose effectes of equal evill, so he is of treble commendacion, that, beinge possessed of the firste, dothe rather abandon his goodes, then, in pursewinge the suggestion of his insatiable desyer, semes to procure willingly his owne torment in this world, with assured daunger to his soule in the day of general accompt; and vanquishing the second, which earst had th' only awe and dominion of him, he leaves a glorious remembrance of ymortalitie to his name, and dischargeth his conscience of a heavie and yrkesome burden. But if the desier to wynn great treasures makes the noble mynd forgetful of the regarde of his honor, with constraint to do things not worthie any way of the title of vertue; or if (according to Virgil in his second *Eneydos*) this gredy thirste after golde, is of force to corrupt the hartes of mortall men and fill theym full of all infection, it is nothing to the power of the sensuall appetit, whyche, once taking possession of our inwarde partes, God knoweth what frutes it bringes furth, formyng us in a frame of brutalitie nothing inferior to th' insensible sorte, accordinge to the Greke orator, saieng that, when a man giveth hymselfe to the pleasures of the fleshe, he makes exchange of th' excellencie whyche he participates wyth th' ymage of God, and becomes of forme and likenes to a beast wythout understanding. Wherin also the wise king of the Hebrues, amongest his sondrie sainges of wisedome, willes us to remember that the lipps of a whore be swete, distillinge droppes of honnye, but th' operacion excedes the bitternes of gawle, and is more sharp then the sworde that cuttes with two

edges, warning every man to shon that sugred evill as a pestilent ayre. 'For that' (saith he) 'the man that escapeth such passages, besides that his life is fre from infynitie of daungers, leaves an honorable remembrance of his vertue to all posterities.' And albeit the great Romaine Capteine Scipio Affricanus, chiefe vanquisher of th' enemies of his contrey, hath left an ymmortalitie of his name by his dexteritie in armes and arte of warr, yet is his glorie no lesse by the contynencye hee used towarde a princesse of Spayne, taken prisoner, amongest others, in one of his battels; whose bewtie albeit seamed of force to allure the most staide and assured harte that was, and he, fryenge in the flame of youthe, not exceding the twenty and fourth yere of his age, did not only absteine from vyolacion of her bodie, with semblable inhibicion to al his capteynes, but also retorned her with pompp due to her estate to her husband, whom also he dismissed into libertie wythout raunsom or other exaction. Wheruppon the Spanishe prince, Indibile, so embraced th' allyance of Rome, that he onely assisted (not longe after) th' empire in the conquest of Spaine. The great Alexander, albeit he was more given to sensualitie then stoode wyth the honor of so worthie a prince, yet forbeare he to do wronge to the chastetie of the mother and wife of the great monarke Daryus; albeit, they being his prisoners, their honor and life were also at his disposicion. Only he had not suche credit in his owne continencie as the Romaine Scipio; for that he durste not once come where they were for feare their bewtie wold force him to a forgetfulnes of noble vertue, where th' Affrican hadde alwaies conversacion and conference with the Spanishe lady in his tent. And because we maye be bolde to entermedle the renowme of our owne time with the glorie of antiquitie, let us geve no lesse commendacion to Frances Sforze, sometime Duke of Myllan, a man of singler fame for a captein of our tyme; who, according to the chronicles of Italy, was presented with a younge maide of rare and exquisite bewtie, by a soldiour of his whiche reserved her life at the saccage of a towne he had won by assalte, and, albeit he was younge, ful of wanton humors, and nothing degenerating from th' Ytalyan inclynacion touching the desier of the fleshe, yet, beinge at the point to assaile the castle of her honor, upon her humble peticion for the savegard of her chastetie, he delivered her wythout any wronge to her virginitie. All which examples as I must confesse to deserve everlasting memorie, and they

A wonderfull vertue in a Romaine Capteine.

A merveilus contynencie in the great Alexander.

DISCOURSE X

that have used such vertuous abstinence meritorious of ymmortall commendacion, yet I can not compare their doinges with the vertu of hym who, thorowly gauled with the arowes of love, having longe courted a young and faire damesell, tasted of every passion whiche may any way pinche the harte of him that is plunged in affection, and desyeringe nothinge but the rewarde of love which gives ende to th' amarous sorowes, after he had spent manye nightes in hollowe dreames, consumed the daies in incerteine ymaginacions, wepte, sighed, and otherwaies tormented hym selfe in the pursewt of his mistres; when his desier was of greatest force, and his hope redie to convert it self into dispaire, being sewed unto, and havyng power over her who earst myght have commaunded him and al that was his, checked the humor of his former apetit, and dismissed her without the losse of the least jote of her honor. Whose example me thinkes makes blushe all other which earst have beene preferred as pattornes of contynencie; for that in over commyng him selfe, he did not only refraine to laye handes upon her, who yelded the use of her honestie rather by necessitie then provocacion of affection, but also, embrasinge her rare assurance in vertue, releved her wante no lesse plentifully then if she had bene his sister, bred in the wombe wherin him selfe was conceived. Of suche one do I meane to discourse in the historie following, as more vertuous and worthie of praise then either Scipio, Alexander, or Sforce. Wherein notwithstanding I refer the judgement to such as have vanquished the force of affection by semblable vertue.

THE recordes of antiquitie and monumentes in Jeyne, making a perticular discription of divers accedentes happening to the noble house of Vyvaldo, have left a special note of one Luchyn (being of the remeynder of that race) who, succeding his parentes in patrymonie and possession, was nothing inferior in al respectes of honor and vertue, and exceded theym all in liberall disposicion and gifte of bowntie, detesting the nigardlike order of the Jenoways, who, gasping more oftene then they get

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meat, do commonly rise from the table with an appitit, and make cleane their teeth when they fil not theyr bellie; like as also, the hungrie Spanyarde, who, beinge at hoame, can live of a litle, but feding of an other man's trencher, his throate seames as wide as the devowring awstrich, and is hable to match the gredieste Flemyng and greatest epicure in Almayne.

The order of the hungrye Spanyarde.

He being thus th' only heir of his house, reaving alreadie amongest the massye bagges of his father, who left him the keyes of his golden coffers, set a broach ymediatly the frank disposition of his liberal hart, and, opening al the gates of his pallaice, denied the repaire of none. Wherby he sommoned in short time a lustye traine of gallandes and glory of youth, more apt to hunt the chase of his spoile then likely to preserve his patrimonie; whom (as one not much overcharged with care to kepe that he had, nor covetous in desier to augment the legaicie and leaving of his father) he used as his chiefe and familiar companions in the pursewte of his pleasure, I meane in the practise of exploites of chivalrye on horsebacke, wrastlinge, leapinge, and other exercises of activitie, wyth a thousande chaunges of recreacions of delite, and pastimes incidente to younge gentlemen; who, fyndinge the care of the worlde hurtfull to their younge and tender inclynacion (and having wherwith to susteine their prodigall vaine) do passe the shorte tyme of their greene yeres in the only ymytacion of pleasure. Wherin this younge heire of Vyvaldo took such large penny worthes, and was assisted wyth so longe a tyme, that he seamed to lacke nothinge to make hym appeare happie in thys worlde, but a dispence from above to defende hym from the daungerous snares and prison of love; who, albeit is blinde and of smal force yet is he ordeined to interrupte the ease of men, with a speciall grudge and common hatred to th' excesse of felicitie in our youth.

Yt is necessary to feele sometime a chaunge of fortune.

And because there is nothinge on earth that is contynually happie, and that it is necessarie to knowe the causes why we are of the world—I meane to be touched sometime wyth a change of our fortune, and passion of hard disgestion, as wel as wee seeke to tast of the delicates of ease and wallowe in

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contynual pleasure—so I thinke, that even as covetousnes and gredie desier is th'ordynarie torment and contynual bourreau that trobles the mynd of th'old man; even so, love is an impression of disquiet, which nature hath sowen in the harts of younge men, bothe to restraine in tyme the raginge follie of youth, and (accordinge to the order of the pinchinge frost killinge the buddes of certeine trees and flowers that appeare duringe the violence of his tyme) to chasten the abuse of their long pleasure wyth a rebuke of no lesse sharpe disposicion then almost insupportable for the tendernes of their discretion. Whiche love, beinge blinde of hymselfe, seames also to use as smal regard in the disposition of his affaires, with lesse discrecion in knitting th'affection of those unhappie wretches whiche he bringes to drawe under the yoke of his awe. Whereof our age swarmes with examples, whiche I am contente to dismisse for this time, by reason of the superfluitie of the same, and referr you to the sequile of this Luchin, who, dandled (as it were) upon the lappe of follye, and served with nothinge but dishes of delit and pleasure, could not beare so even a hand upon the bridle of his affections, but, or he wiste, he let slipp the steddie raigne of his libertie, and became extremely in love with a simple maide, whose beautie he accompted of more price then herselfe, or parentes, noble by discente or other speciall assistance of fortune. And, albeit his personage and livyng, with th'estimation of other gyftes whiche nature had lente him above the reste, seamed sufficiently hable to make hym meritorious of favor of the beste ladie of a countrey, yet love (havyng neither respecte to his race nor regarding his greatnes) did close his eyes from the viewe of suche as were hable to answere him in equalitie of discente and vertue, and converted his harte and affection to the contemplacion of a simple maide; whose name, albeit is not of such veneration as Camylle and Lucresia, whose high titles onlye do importe a certeine semblance and creditt of honestie in the person of a publike curtisan, yet her chastetie, with womanly governement, deserveth no lesse commendacion then the most approved of auncient time. For, being the doughter of a pore man, she grudged not with the porcion

of povertie, but thought it a principall vertue to embrace the lott of her state with thankefull contentement, and be carefull to releve the harde condicon of her parentes with the honest endevor of her handes. She made not her beautye a looking glasse for the worlde, but studied to be worthie of so precious a jewell. She woulde not suffer her body to be pampred with delicacye, leaste her mynde sholde be subjecte to th' infection of evill; nor give any place to th' alarmes of the fleshe, leaste the same should prevale above her resistance. And being of the age of fiftene yeres, her modestie was of no lesse admiracion, serving as a lanterne to light all the ladies of Jeyne, then her beautye (without a seconde) hable to allure the best assured of a countrey. Whose firste viewe and simple regarde brought suche suddaine astonishement to the loftie minde of this Luchyn that, after he had conferred the secrett misterie which nature had hidden in her face, with the special gifte of seamely behavior bestowed uppon her by God, his harte seamed enchaunted, and eyes as lymed with the glaunce of her lookes, not hable to withdrawe their regardes from the contemplacion of so perfecte a beautie; whiche was not set out to the sale, by any artyficiall meanes of paintynge, or assistance of pouder, or other vaine experience of divers of oure counterfaite masquers now a dayes: neyther did she seame to preferr any suborned braverie for th' advancement of so precious a dowrye; either by superfluous frizilation of the heare, twincklinge of the eye, wrynginge of the lip or wrestinge the chyn, minsynge or measurynge her pace, as thoughe her joyntes were out of tune or tyed together wyth pointes, or other lewde jestures devised by the curtisan, and practised as a principle and chiefe grace at this daye by divers of our delicatt and wanton dames; who, not waighing the due merite of so precious an ornament, and lesse worthie to weare so rare a badge of nature, do abuse the goodnes of theim both, in converting the onely gifte of God into a detestable meane to agravate synne.

Beautye.

Women seame masquers in painting their faces.

And receiving thus the firste somonce of love, whose arrowes, being fethered with the wing of affection, do leave the harte wounded with a burnyng desier to pursue

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th' instigacion of our appetit, he founde himselfe to weake to abide any more alarams. Albeit, striving a litle at the first to defende his libertie, with the intent to aunswere appeale to th' uttermost of his forces, he brewed the broth of his owne bale, and renewed the torment of his passion in such sort, that there were fewe dayes in the weke wherin he performed not his pale-walke afore the lodging of his faire Janiquette; whom, if by any adventure his roaving eyes did spie at the doare, he forgatt not to salute with no lesse humylitie then if she had bene one of the greateste ladies in Jeane, courting her besides with a low reverence, and other offices of dutiful civilitie, in no lesse reverend maner then if he had presented his service to the greatest princesse of Italy. Whiche also drive the girle into some amaze, as one not exsperienced in the order of such amarus gretinges, and lesse used to be saluted by any gentleman equall in callinge or condicion to Siegneur Luchyn; whose fame, as it was great, both by the authoritie he beare in the citie, and reputacion of his living, wyth other giftes and ornamentes of nature, so it drive her into doble astonishment to conster the meaning of his newe courtesie. Albeit, leaving the divinacion of his intent to a time of more leasure, she retired to the vertue of her good norriture, for the which she was no lesse meritorious then imbrased (as you see) for her bewtie; and drawing the blod of seamly shame into her face, which set such a glass of natural white and red of her complexion that her coollor seamed to be died in the dewe of the fragrant morning of May, and retorned his courtsie with a salutacion of semblable humilitie. Wherin, he rejoysed with more contentment of minde, then if the Quene of Spaine had yelded him favor to kysse her hand. But what nede he tickle himself to make himself laugh, or why did he not eschew the presence and place of his enemy, rather then seame so subjecte to the sommonce of his eye, to whom love hath given the gifte of flatterie to deceive the rest of the partes. For, if at the first he had corrected the flickering reaporte of his eyes, his harte had bene fre from desier, and he not at the brinke of passion and

tormentes; and if, at the biginning, he had abandoned the place, he had also dismissed the remembrance of that whiche nowe hathe bounde hym to pursewe the queste of hys owne disquiete. Neyther dothe he other thynge in visitynge the place where shee is, then throwe water uppon hoate ymbers, whyche dobleth the heate, and forceth the flame with more expedicion; for the more he behelde her, and the lesse she regarded hym, the greater grew his affection, geving treble increase to his desier. Beautie.

And albeit she was neither fyne in attire, sett out in robes of riche arraye, nor deckte with apparell for the decoration of her naturall beautye, yet appeared she no lesse precious in the eye of this gallande then if she had bene trimmed for the nonste in the same order that the poetes faine of the browne Egypciane, when she was broughte to lye wyth the Romaine capteine, Marcus Anthonius. He fayled not to reiterate his haunte with an ordinarie trade to the streete of Janiquette, resolvynge his common abode or place of staye righte over againste her lodginge. Whiche increased her doubte of that misterye, till nature, that discusseth the darknes of suche doubtes and bringes the moste rude creatures of the worlde to be capable in the argumentes of love, revealed unto her the meanyng of that ridle, sayinge that the roundes and often tornes, wyth vaylinge of bonnett, whiche the proude pirott made afore the dore of her fortresse, was no other thynge then the intisynge harmonie of the *Syrenes*, or other stale, to allure or make her plyable to th'appetite of his will. Wherin she was the rather resolved for certeinetie, for that, within shorte tyme passing that waye, he ymagined a staye righte over againste her house; where, feedinge the tyme for the nonste in devise with one of his frendes, gave skoape to his eyes to peruse (with continuall contemplacion) the majestie of his mistres, in suche sorte, that one of her compagnions, exercisynge also the use of the nedle, encountred by chaunce the gredie regardes he caste to Janiquette; to whom, sayth she, 'thou arte litle beholding to the goodnes of fortune that seames so greate an enemye to the merite of thy beautie; for, if thy condicion or calling Mearemaides.

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wold admit the advancement which the present preferment of nature doth offer the, no doubte thou sholdest become in short time the honor and decoration of al thy house. For, touchinge the resolucion of mine eyes, and judgemente of my conceite, proceding of the devouring regardes yonder gentleman casteth towardes the, he is not only the bondman of thy beautye, but also so addicted to the service of the same, that only thou, Janiquette, may dispose of him, his honor and lyfe and al that he hath. And trulye thou arte not so happie to be the controller of so noble a champion, as of litle discretion if thou make small accompte of his service, whiche the veraye greatest dames of our province woulde reserve as a special relique or jewell. Neither oughtest thou to make thy beautye of such price as the respect therof shold prevaile above the goodnes of so greate an offer; seinge that the walles of this towne do inclose a nomber of younge ladyes and gentlewomen, that, excedynge the in beautye and bringyng up, wolde not seame curious in admittyng the benefyt of so good a fortune.'

Janiquetta aunswereth her compaignion.

Whereunto the honeste Janiquette, that neither took pitie of his paynes, nor allowed his endevor, and lesse liked the perswacions of her companion (who, peradventure, boarded her so farr to make a prooffe of her honestie) replied, no lesse wisely then wyth more discrecion then comonly we note now a dayes in one of her yeres:— 'Yf I were borne' (quoth she) 'under th' influence of fortune, or bounde to abide the sentence of her doome, I were not unlike to performe th' exspectacion of thy allurementes; but, seing I am derived of a contrary constellation, moostring alwayes under the ensigne and colloures of vertue, I have my salfe conduite at all times to withstand th' invasion of such infections, with authoritye to defye the malice of any such accident. And touching the commendacions which you seme to give to *mon* Seigneur Luchin, both in the title of honor, estimacion of his publike authoritie in th' affaires of this citye, together with his dexteritie in al giftes incidente to a gentleman, I saye the more plentifully he is considered at the handes of God with a singularitie in suche ornamentes, so much the more ought

he to studie to seame worthie of so rare a participacion; not converting the vertue of his talent given him from above into a sinister entente, and disposicion of wickednes, to seduce the chastetie of simple maides, whose faultes (if any be) he ought rather to reprehende with severitie, then minister corrupcion contrary to the commission of his honor. Neyther shall he at anye time (I hope) prevaile so over my beautye, as the use of the same shall give him other contentement then a frendlye *bon jour* of the mouth (whiche all honeste maides may do without prejudice) thinking the frendship of nature of no greater moment in givyng me the title of faire, then the vertue meritorious in preserving the same (accordyng to the merite) without spott of infamye or worthye reproche of the worlde. For her offence is double afore God' (sayeth she), 'and treble skandalous in the mouth of the multitude, that exchaungeth her beautye, being a chiefe signe and argument of grace which God hath painted in the face of a woman (as the philosopher saith), for any other price (how greate so ever it appeare) then the honeste pawne and gage of lawfull matrimonye; accordinge to th'institucion of oure saviour, who, allowing chiefly the oblacion of chastetie, dothe condemne the contrary into perentory destruction. And what have we in this worlde that we ought to make so deare accompte of as our honeste name, being the thing that yeldes us not only an admiracion whilste we enjoye the use of lyfe upon earth, but also makes us live after our death with a perpetuall commendacion of our integritye to the remeinder of our race? Doste not thou knowe (my deare Maryone) that, in the swete and dewye mornynges of the spring, there appeares certeine flowers no lesse delitefull to the beholders, then yeldynge an odiferous smell with an inticynge desyer to be gathered, so long as their fragrant and freshe perfumes indures; but when the heate of the son (perching the gallands of Aurora) shall pearce thorowe bothe boodd and roote, and mortifye the livelye hewe of suche brickle creatures, the flower is not only forgotten and loathed, whiche earste was so much embraced, but the desyer of all men taken awaye, as thoughe there never had bene any such. Likewise the

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glistering apple, growing upon the high spraies in the pleasant landes of Angeau, semes a thing of great delectacion to the eye, and of no lesse pleasante taste, so long as he is entyer and without corrupcion; but after the worme hath eyther made a breach, or his greenes or pleasante maturitie lost his force, and converted into a rotten ripenesse, his bewtie dekaies wyth desyer any longer to kepe hym. Even so a mayde, what povertie soever oppresse her, so long as she kepes unspotted her surname and title of chastetie, is not only admitted, but also may chaleng, place amongest the best of a countrye; but when the caterpillor hath once cropped the leaffe and devoured the boodd, the tree doth not only die and perishe with infamye, but the remembrance of such stocke and frute remeines in the recordes of reproche to the opening of the greate booke of general accompte, when al faltes shal be reveiled and punished, according to their disposicion and qualitie. And sewer it is better for a woman, of what degree soever she be, to dy with honor, and buyrye the bourden of honest renown with her bodie in the grave, then, enjoying the fruicion of life, to be marked of the multitude with a note of general rebuke: which (as a moothe in a garment) will not ceasse to eate and devour her present estimacion, and make notorious, besides, every age of her succession by the desert of her disordred life, loasing the only cause that makes me joye in myselfe wyth so great desier to live. Wherin, because I may the rather performe th' effect of thys last resolucion, I will firste, wyth an unfayned hart, make invocacion to the highest for th' assistance of his grace, to garde me from th' assaltes and peppered provocations of the fleshe, and then cut of all suche occasions as may eftesones advance the suggestion of the same, or seame any way an ympedimente to the vowe I have presentlye made: whych I doubt not wilbe armes sufficient enough to repulse the alarams of seigneur Luchyn and raise the siege which I see he hath planted agaynst the fortresse of my chastetie.' Wherin she omitted not th' execution: for, from that instante, shee kepte her selfe unsene of anye but her frendes and kinsefolkes, comminge lyttle or nothynge abroade, and lesse willing to be spied

out of windows or stande at the doore; leavinge thereby an example worthye of ymitacion to all estates and sortes of women; but specially suche gigges and pratlinge houswives as can not contente theymselves with the ayre of the house, nor give one pricke with the nedle, oneless she sit at the doare; as though her exercyse were onelye to menteyne chatt wythe the streete walkers, or keepe a standynge and make challenge agaynste all commers. Whyche is the thynge, that (you mothers) and tutours of lytle girles oughte chyefly to respecte in the direction of youre tender charges, I meane to bridle and brynge upp youre pupilles and ympes that have follye tyed on their backes in the awe of correction; and yf they transgress the order of good governement, you must not forgett to offer theym the racke and tormentes of the rodde; which you must minister unto theim in the greenes of their yeres, and affore the tendrenes of youthe, with wante of discrection, wil suffer theim to discerne their owne inclinacion. For as the philosopher tearmeth theym to bee a kinde of cattell more apte to declyne then any other reasonable creature; so (saith he), yf they get once the bit betwene their teethe, and crop of the hearbee of ryotus will it is harder to reclayme theym, eyther by awe, feare, or compulsion, or gentle intreatie, then the wilde haggarde or rammish falcon by any connynge or devise of their keper. Besides as a maide is a jewell of no lesse greate price then rarely to be founde, so she is a vessell moste bryckle and easye to be broken; and being once eyther crackte or corrupted, she liveth in none other accompte then in comon wonder of the people and pointed at of all the worlde.

Wherefore, you mothers, that in the brynging upp of your doughters, will give a showe of your owne vertue, with no lesse care of the honor of your children, must forgett to pamper your younglines with presentes of their willes, or dandle theym uppon the lapp of dame folly, but feede theym rather with the discipline of good nouriture, not sparing the order of due correction, leaste you spill the future hope and expectation of their well doynge. And better it is to have a mayde smell of honest simplicitie, usyng a temperate scilence in her tounge and order

The norsse.

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of talke, then (Ytalianated in legerdemaines of subteltye, and pricked full of the fethers of foolyshe pride) to have the tounge of a popingaie, bablinge without order or discrecion: for that the one is a vertue of it selfe, and the veray lyne to leade her to advauncement; and in practisynge the other, she procures a discredit to her parentes for their necligence in their education, and her selfe but laughte at in the companye of wise and discrete dames, and (that which worce is) led by suche guides into the botomeles pit of everlasting infamye. Remember th'advise of Marcus Aurelius, who, writing of the slipper disposition of some women, with instruction to abridge the perentory humour which nature hath given theim, gyves this generall charge to all governours of nourceries and tutors of litle girles, that they stande so sewerly uppon the garde of t'honnour of their charges, that they neyther be sene out of windowes, stande as stales at the dore, suffred to visit any place of th'ordinarie hawnte of men, called to secrete conference without commission or companye of her keapor, but also barde th'accesse and presence of all men; for that (saith he) the ill can not be utterly prevented, onelesse the causes that maye procure it bee cleane taken awaie; neither is it possible for a lady to kepe the reputacion of her honor that makes herselfe incidente to the hawnte of greate companies, with desier to be a comon feast-maker, and visit every banquet. And the more she is invested with honor and high callinge, the more care is due to the preservation of so greate a title, and lesse libertie or licence is enjoyned her to raunge abroade or seeke to satisfie th'appetit of her pleasure, and her falte of treble slaunder in the mouthes of the blasphemous nomber: which albeit is without the compasse of my history, yet I thoughte it not unmete to note this litle remembraunce; both to warne theim that use lesse care then is necessarie to prevente so greate a mischiefe, and to wishe all ladies to accompte their honour as the gifte of God, and speciall ornament of their life. Whiche I could enlarge with copie of authorities, if I had the assistance of convenient time and consent of my historie—willinge me nowe to repaire to Janiquette; who,

perswadinge greate impossibilitie in a younge mayde of intisinge beautie, desierus to enncownter th'amarus glees of menne, and kepe cacquett with all comers, to escape eyther without some great falte in th'abuse of her bodie, or at leaste to leave occasion of suspicion and jeleus opinion of her honestie, amonge suche as use commonly to recorde the lyfe and doinges of greate ladies, soughte to prevente the like accidente with a contrary vertue; for, keping her selfe (for the moste parte) within the house of her father, she barred th'accesse of Luchyn, and closed her eyes from the view of his presence. And if at some tyme her affaires required her to visitt the doare, and Luchyn (by lyke chaunce) reiterate his appeale, with semblable somonce and salutacions of accustomed courtesie, she fixed her eyes uppon her worke, dissemblinge not to see the thinge whiche her harte colde not brooke, and her eyes detested to beholde; and douting that under the vaile of that masqued humilitie, and kynde of courtinge not convenient for her callynge, might lurke some secrete mischiefe and displeasure of doble consequence, she semed to abhor bothe one and the other with equal detestacion, and converting his sighes into ayre, and teares to paye hym the hier of his follie, she seamed only to supplie the whole tyme of her beinge there in the companie of her companions; leaving pore Luchyn, no lesse amased at theys newe toyes and trickes of a haggarde, then (at the first) he tooke pleasure when she requited him with semblable glee. Al which, notwithstanding, colde neyther discourrage him from the pursute of the resolucion of his mynde, nor put him in dispaire of his future fortune, thinckynge that time wold remove the vaile of her rigour and convert her into a creature more plyable, assisted therin with th'oppinion of such as, accompting smal conquest of things gotten with litle labour, do yelde the greateste glorie to that whiche is won with th'extremitie of time and travell.

And being still norished with the hope of victorie, renewed eftesones his purmenades and palewalkes affore her doare, advauncing hym self so far furth, somtimes, that he entred into devise and discourse of love; albeit so coldly

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that the same neither declared th' ymportance of his desier, nor bewrayde the present passion of his minde. Wherunto, notwithstanding, she gave so slender regarde that her replie dismissed him with no lesse contentemente for the presente, then lykelihood of better successe hereafter. It is a custome amongest the Jeneveys, and all the province about, that the young men, having poeseys of flowers, and meting their mistresses in the streetes, or elswhere, may present theym therewith, without any mislike or cause of suspicion of the people; beynge, also, a note of no lesse curtesie for the woman, having flowers in her hande or bossome, to make lyke retourne to her servant: whyche kynde of courtyng th' amarus Luchyn forgatt not too prefer as a testey of hys service and furtherer of his sute. For, watchynge longe tyme the hawnte of his mistres, he founde her at laste, not onely aloane and voyde of compainie, but in place convenient to put his longe requeste uppon tearmes: whiche gretinge of fortune, or gifte of happie chaunce, yf it were welcomme to hym, I leave it to the judgemente of suche as, languishynge in the lyke disease, dare neyther discover their greefe nor demaunde their due remedie. And havynge (of purpose, peradventure) certeine jelly-flowers in his hande—whiche were of more price because winter raged then, with extremitie of coulde, the chiefeste enemye to flowers and tender boods on th' earth—he saluted her with his request in this sorte:—

Luchyne woeth Janiquette.

'Yf the continuance of my service were hable to warrant me at length the merite of the same, or the offer of any hope (in the meane time) had vertue to procure moderation to any passion, the one shold not ende but by the sentence of death, and the other wolde I embrace as a speciall preserver of my life. But seynge the one is of no lesse momente with you then the other unlikely too happen, I am dryven to exclaime agaynste youre beautie as the onelye cause of my greefe and entire enemye of my rest; but chieflye th' unnaturall vigour which you suffered to rampier hym selfe so depely in th' intralles of your hart, and seele your eyes of compassion agaynst me, that you will neyther admit my teares, sighes, and other pitifull regardes without nomber—whereof the pale complexion of my face, with other trembling

joyntes of th'exterior partes, have made sufficient declaracion—nor credit the infynit simptomes, and thundringe alarams, whiche the only glymmeringe viewe of your bewtie ceasseth not to minister to the weake forces of my feble harte; who, as your prisoner, reddye to resigne the keyes and castel of his libertie, is heare become the pitiful solycitor of his own cause, conjuringe you by that compassion which ought to accompanie so rare and precious an ornamente of nature, to remove at laste the vaile of youre former crueltie, and, in beholdinge what power love hath given you over me, to dismisse all delaies of comfort, and admit me into your service, that have vowed never to departe out of the least of your commaundementes. Whereunto she was driven to answere, rather by compulsion of the place and tyme then any desyer to debate wyth him in a matter of such vanitie:—

Janiquetta aunswereth Luchyn.

'The merite of your service, syr' (sayth she) 'is farr greater then I can or may graunte his due meede, and your passion like to be restored by her that is ignorante of the cause, and lesse knoweth the order of your disease. And touchinge the reste of youre protestacion, coated rather withe argumentes of illusions, and subtill cerimonies to seduce my simplicitie, thenne any resemblance of vertue or intente to expose the frutes of true affection, I can not aunswere with other tearmes then juste disdayne of your liberall offer, with litle care you use to the reputacion of myne honour. Neyther is it to me that you ought to addresse thys ambushe or traine of alluramentes, considringe the inequalitie of our houses denieth a consente of mariage; and to graunte love to one that craves it in other sorte thenne th'institucion of that sacred lawe dothe allowe, I thinke it no lesse detestable afore God, then a spott of perpetuall infamye, which tyme it selfe can not rase out of the remeinder of my house. And small honor is it for you to pursue a queste of so litle availe; whose begynninge, as it proceded of a superfluytie of founde humors, raginge withoute reason or guide of vertue, so the contynuance wyll ymporte but a discredit to your calling, and the end yelde you neyther contentement nor commendacion. Wherfore, I pray you, suffer th'assurance

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of my vertue to worke her force; who, in correcting the ronning appetit of your follie, wyll make you mayster of your selfe; and let not so vaine a thinge as the simple glaunce of bewtie (which is more apte to declyne then hable to indure) prevaile above your aunciente estimacion of honor, nor draw you wythout the lymittes of and bondes of your callinge: for, for my parte I have inclosed myne honor and life together in one vessell, wyth intent to make a presente of theym bothe, at one instant, to hym whom I beseche maye take awaye your traunce, and restore you to your entyer, and defende mee at all tymes from th'invasion of so pernicious an enemye.'

God.

'What!' sayth he (not wythout some argument of collor) 'do I seame altogether unworthy of your favor, or am I not likely to performe th'offer of my service?' 'Both the one and the other,' quod Janiqueta, 'for I oughte not, nor wyll not, passe a graunte of my good wyll to any but suche as the lawe of the Churche and consente of my frendes shall enjoyne me to marie: neither can you do a greater wrong to your own estimacion, then, in embasing your greatnes, to becom the servant of so pore a mayde as I. And albeit you were contented to make an equallitie, and indifferent distribucion of the greatnes of your estate, wyth the litle estymacion that fortune hath preferred me unto; yet the grudge of my conscience, quarrelling with the foulnes of the act, wil neither suffer me to admit your offer, nor consent to your request, desiring you, for end, to exchang your intent and make a present of your service to some other that knoweeth how to requit so great a courtesie better then I; for I neyther like your phrase nor circunstance, and muche lesse determyn to spende any longer tyme with you.' Wherewith, albeit he began eftesones to replie with the offer of his flowers (which she refuced) she whipped into the house, and shoot the doare uppon the nose of her amarus clyent; who became so amased with the soddaines of the facte, that he seamed as one newe fallen out of the clowdes or dreamyng of the disolucion of the world. At last, beinge past the misterye of his traunce, he repaired to his house with his head full of proclamacions; where,

entringe into a warr of newe devises, he seamed to doble his tormente, not hable to ymagyn the meane to wyn the good will of the mayde, who seamed no lesse harde to be plied then the sharpeste and most steape rockes upon all the coaste of Spaine. Love had so infected hym with desier to enjoye her, that he coulde have perswaded hym selfe to have maried her, yf it had not bene for the ympedyment of his parentes; whose displeasure he knewe wolde stretche so farre, that they wolde not sticke to destroye the mayde, to th'ende the note of such a facte mighte be utterly extirped and rooted out of the remembrance of all ages. Besides, th'estimacion of hym selfe appered also as a staie to his meanyng, and the authoritie he bare in the citie of no lesse effecte to diswade him, and yet the poison that first infected him, prevailing above the force of any perswacions, presentinge hym eftesones a newe hope to cool the mayden-head of Janiquette, declared unto him that both she and her parentes were the children of povertie, and that there was no dore so stronge but a golden keye myghte open his locke, nor fortresse of such strength, but he wolde yelde to th'offer of monye. Wherefore, restored to a freshe hope with the offer of this new devise, and desierus to see what thies ministers cold do by their art, he addressed him to one of his neighbors, of no lesse familiaritie then great trust with Janiquette; whom he so conjured with the charme of his pleasant tounge, and certeine peces of gold that marched betwene theim, that shee promised to become the solicitor of his cause, and give such a charge to the maide, that she sholde not finde suche conninge to confute her raisons, as she seamed valliant in the repulse of th'assaltes of her lover; who, because his messeinger shold not departe unarmed at all pointes, he willed her to be no nigarde of large promisses, offrynge wholl mounteines of golde, silver, or jewells, or any other thinge of what price soever it were, that seamed any waie hable to perce her, and make her plyable to his desier. 'And if she be assailed' (saith he) 'with the comon feare that trobles all women—I meane yf she doute the swelling of her bellye—assure her, that I will not onely mary her to her contentacion, but make her

Love.

Golde and sylver.

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porcion worthe a thousande doccates.' His neighbour, albeit her arte was not to deale in messages of love, and that shee estemed greatly the chastetie of maydes, yet, comparinge the povertie of Janiquette with his present promisse to releve it, gave hym eftesones a seconde assurance of her diligence, with pretestacion to make her strike sayle and comme under hys lee. Wherein she was deceived; for neyther his large promisses nor presentes of greate price coulde perswade her, and muche lesse th'oracion of the messenger, who uttered the cause of her comming in this sorte:—

The bawde woeth Janiquette.

'Recordyng (my girle) the harde condicion of thy presente state, I fynde the same more subjecte to a clymatt of longe contynuance, then in hope or apte to be relived by any industrie of thy parents; who, albeit have heretofore enjoyed the goodnes of fortune, and borne a porte of honeste callynge, yet thowe seeste they are nowe in the daunger of desolation, and fallen so farre into the mallice of povertie, that they wante meanes, not only to supplie the needy disposicion of their owne lyfe, but also to preferr the to advauncemente due to thy deservyng. I greve no lesse also to see the flower of thy youth slyp away by such stealthe, and the pyning misery of thy parents to be an impediment to the preferment of thy beauty; which, albeit, is honored of a nomber with the offer of marriage, yet, when thei have sifted thy state, and tried to th'utermost the small inheritance and simple dowrie of thy father, they do not only disclayme their sute, but seame to departe and breake of, as thoughe they were infected with some contagius disease of your house. Wherefore, seinge the dispaire in thy parentes habilitie takes awaye all hope of assistance at their handes or by their meanes, and that fortune once in the course of our life dothe put into our handes the offer of a good torne, yf thowe wilte repose thy selfe uppon my advise, I will sett the in better state then ever was the beste of thy house.' The maide dowtynge no trayson in her olde neighbour, with lesse exspectacion to heare that whyche she ymagyned leaste, enquired her opynion:—

Riches.

'My advise,' saith shee, 'I knowe will drive you into some amase at the firste, as a thinge neyther convenient for myne

age nor seamely for my callynge, and disagreing wholly from myne auncient order and custome of doynge, albeit, yf thou make a care of thy proffitt, thowe wilte not sticke to pursue the benefitt of thy fortune; neyther will my councell ymporte suche prejudice for the presente, as the sequeile in shorte tyme yelde the a tribute of treble proffitt. I have harde of late that there is a young gentleman in this towne, so extremely in love and desierous of thy beautie, that he accomptes nothinge so deare as the thinge that maye lyke the, and yeldeth detestacion to that which thou loathest; neither wolde he spare the massie store of his treasure, or large revenue of his livinge, nor sticke to make the perill of hys life the price of thy good will and favor; with this addicion, also, that if thou wilte make hym the maister of his request, and passe a graunte of that he requires, to provide the mariage to thy contentacion, with the dowrie of a thousande doocates; whereof I have comission to make the assurance. Me thinkes a falte don in secrett is halfe perdoned, and one offence bringes no custome of synne. Wherefore, use thy discrecion, and thynke that tyme will dispatche the of hym, when thou maiste reatorne home loaden with the spoile of his richesse and jewells.'

Here Janiquette, suppressing the just cause of her anger with a mervelous modestie, not commonly seene in one of her calling and bringing upp, seamed, for the only respect of the old yeres of her neighbour, to close her mouthe from open exclamacion agaynste her lewde abuse; and, aunsweringe wyth more moderacion then th' importance of her wronge required, replied in thys sorte:— Janiquette reprehendethe the bawde.

'What villanye can be greater then to make a common merchandise of that whiche ought not to be boughte but by vertue; or what disposicion of more detestacion in any christyen then for a woman to make a sale of her honor, and measure so precious a jewell by the price of her profitt? Do you thinke that eyther the view of riches, or jewels, or prodigall offers with large promisses, are hable to do more then the long offer of service, wyth general commendacion of the giftes that be in hym whyche hath suborned you to preferr this embassage? Or who is

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she of so villenus a nature, to withstande the sondry alarmes of teares, wyth pittifull somonce of so many sighes, and yelde at lengthe to the detestable heralte of all corruption? No! no! If I had liked the bargaine, my consent had come freely, without the earneste pennye of filthye mariage, whych you seame to prefer, with an offer of a dowrie, confirmed by an assurance or warrantie of your commission. Is it possible that, yeldinge hym the flower of my virginitie, to make a profession of true frendshippe to anye other, but that the blodde of shame will renewe the remembrance of my former falte? Sewer if he prevaile so farre, and wyn that pointe of mee, the place shalbe severall to hym selfe, and the breach not entred by any other. Neither shal he tryumphe longe in the victorye, nor I live to lament the losse. For as it is the true propertie of a pure maide to defend that ornament to th' uttermost gaspe of her breath, and if, by destenie, the force of the oppressor prevaile above her strength, to persecute hym to deathe with the losse of her owne life; so, if I be not hable to performe the one, these handes shal be the bloodye ministers of the other, to the greate contentement of me and open shame of him that shal survive: for it is long since I was perswaded that an honest death is the renowme of the life passed. For the rest, to th' end the present wrong you have don me may serve, hereafter, to staie the course of your rashenes in the like affaires, with promisse and protestacion to procede no further in like dishonestie, I pray you perswade your selfe that, if you conclude and knitt upp the latter remeinder of your yeres in the practise of abhominable indevours, the commendacion of your lyfe passed, wilbe converted into the title of a common bawde; swearyng unto you for my parte, by the fayth of a pure virgin, that if it were not for the respecte of the honestie I have hitherto noted in you, and honor that I owe to the olde yeres and vertue of your age, I wolde so publishe your doinge, that your presente message shoulde reproche you in what companye soever you comme.' Wherewith she so choaked her olde neygbor—that was not so misticall in the conveigh of suche trades as divers of our

Money.

A maide ought to defend her honestie even to the laste dropp of her blodde.

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The she baud of London caryeth a basket in her hande, the he baude a ring in his mouth.

chandellors and supersticious basket bearers in London; who, not onely make a profession of baudrie, but live by the filthye gaine procedynge of that art—and havynge nothynge to replye desiered Janiquetta to pardon her, alledgynge that the care and compassion she had of her povertie procured those tearmes, rather then any desyer to seduce her. And so departynge with her shorte shame and lesse proffit, made particular relacion of her successe to the amarus Luchyn, who, hearinge the sentence of dispaire, seamed no lesse passioned with present dollor then if he had bene sharpelye assayled wyth a fitt of the burnynge feaver. He entred straighte awaye into the pageante of a madd man, pasinge his chamber wyth uncerteine steppes, and, throwing his armes a crosse uppon his breast, with his eyes directed to the heavens, began to ymagyn howe to passe the misterye of this traunce. Whiche soddaine scilenc served chiefly as a speciall supplie to restore the warre with contraryetye of hys thoughtes; for the more he wente aboute to extirpp the remembrance of his mystres, and committ her to utter oblivion, the more he made hym selfe subject to her beautye, and grafted more strongelye the rootes of affection in the bottome of his harte.

And sewer it is no small matter for a man that is in love, pursewinge the good will of his ladye wyth contynuall importunityes the space of two or three yeres, and receyve nothynge but the offer of a vaine and uncerteine hope; whiche feedes the mynde wyth suche suggestions and argumentes of good successe, that every repulse seames to present a flaterynge favor, and the breath of everye rigorous worde importes an intisinge allurement, until dispaire (blowing the retraite of that warre) do publishe his commission to dismisse all hope and likelyhood of future success.

The large feldes envyronnynge the greate citie of Jeyne seamed to lacke skoape and compasse to comprehende the multitude of thoughtes, wyth diversitie of ymagynacions, that even nowe occupied the head of Luchin; who, exclaymynge uppon the haggarde disposition of his mistres, forgatt not also to forge cause of complainte againste love; for that, as a blynde guide, he had ladd hym into the

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bottomles golphe of fancie; and leavyng hym there, readie to be devoured with the raginge waves of affection, wolde not showe hym the waye to comme out, and eschewe so greate and presente a perill. Albeit, he oughte rather to have reprehended his owne simplicitie and weaknes of sprite, which (with the wante of assurance in vertue) made hym subject to that, whiche all wise men oughte to governe with awe and correction—I meane the sensual appetites and provocations of the fleshe, whiche are, or oughte to serve as, slaves to the place and house of our raison.

Luchyn, prolonging his passion with an increase of disquiet, seamed to fall from complaintes of dule into tearmes of furye; and, feedynge altogether uppon the hearbe and appetit of rage, suffred hymselfe to be so much infected wyth the humor of frenzie, that his wrathe was turned into woddnes: wherein, as the desperate lover doth seldome measure his sleepe by the length of the nightes, so he seamed here to excede the ravenous order of the gredie wolfe huntinge his uncerteine praye, in the darke; for som time he rolled upon a bedd, and som time wallowed upon the rushes in the flore, and nowe and then, for a chaunge of exercise, he tried the hardnes of the postes with the knockes of his head; and, albeit he had the libertie of a longe gallery, with fyve or six chambers to rove and ronne at his pleasure, yet, judging the same not circuit sufficient to conteine the circumstance of his passion, he comitted one parte of his discourse to the witnes of the ayre, within a faire garden, yelding prospecte to the windowe of his gallery; where, makyng invocacion to the moone (as the lanterne that then gave lighte to the earthe) craved that she wolde open her vessells of pitie, and lette fall some droppes of consolacion in a showre of moysture, to quenche the burnynge heate of hys tormentes; whyche he thoughte were thondred upon hym, rather by the sentence and dome of his angrie destenie then as a desert and due merit of his owne follie. And, being in dispair to dispatche hym selfe oute of that daunger, confirmed here by experience the opinion of the philosopher, who, treating *de fragilitate humana*, describeth the gates and fore fronte of the pallaice

of mischiefe to be paynted with allurementes and enticinge provocations to enter; 'but, beynge within, you fall' (saithe he) 'ymediately into the pitte of tormentes worse then the goolphe or lake of hell; neither can you have saffe conduitt too retire at your pleasure'; argewynge, hereby, that it is farr easyer to fal into the handes of daunger, then to purchasse a dispence of perill, and that the diseases bee more ordinarie and common then the remedie readye to restore the patient. Yt was bothe pleasure and pitie to here hym quarell with his fortune, with complaint of hys mishap, somtime blamyng the simplicitie and faintnes of his corage in yelding his harte prisoner, and hym selfe captiff, to so meane a personage, and to convert the benefit of his former libertie into a continuall care and desiere of a beautie lesse durable then the flickering glosse of the freshe marigolde, mostering in Orient coullers all the daye, till the declininge of the sonne do somon hym to resigne and retire to a withered stalke. And, omittyng no sorte of exclamacions, he accused greatly th'imbecilitye of men, that are so apte to be made subject to the thing that is derived of th'imperfection of theim selves, and ordeyned (from the begynnyng) to be their vassals, and at commaundement to serve theim in their necessarie affaires. But, by and by, he seamed to quarell with his rashe imputacion in blaspheming so unworthely that noble secte. Wherewith, examining the deformitie and wantes in him selfe, resolved the same to be the cause of her juste disdain and his evill fortune. 'For' (saith he) 'I have knowen divers (favored with the giftes of nature and assistance of courtlike education) that have reapte other rewardes of their service then the rigour of my mistres will expose; neither is there any woman, howe simple so ever she be, that hath not a capacitie to discerne both good and ill, and judgement to consider the meritt of him that makes her a presente of his service.' At laste he fell into tearmes of commendation of his mistres, with repeticion of her giftes and vertue; wherein, accomptyng her the paragon of his time, he wished her derived of some noble house, to th'ende the greatnes of her race mighte give increase to the renowme of her vertue and chastetie,

Women derived of th' imperfection of men.

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whiche he thoughte but to constante for the purpose he wente aboute, desieringe to enjoye her but as his secrett frinde, and converte her into a fountaine to satisfie the thirste of his pleasures, wished that such immovable constancie and perfection of minde mighte fynde alwayes place of abode in suche as men do chuse for their wyves and lawfull compagnions of their bedd. Wherewith, as he filled the ayre with the sighes of his complaintes, and fedd the eyes of his mynde with a secrett contemplation of his cruell mystres, the messenger of Aurora, pronownsinge the approche of the daye in discoverynge certeine skarlett beames of the sonne in the bottome of the easte firmament, gave ende to his discourse whyche was begon at the rysynge of the moone. And whether it were that the longe complainte of hys greefe hadde broughte some moderation to hys passion, or th' emptines of his brayne for wante of sleepe moved hym to putt confydence in dreames, or whether a newe suggestion of the sprite whych firste possessed hym, presented a freshe hope or lykelyhood of that whyche he oughte to have forgotten, or what it was, it is harder to judge then easye to eschewe: but, entringe into a litle arbour or cabynet, curiously deckte with divers bowes and braunches of odiferous smel, he tooke his lute and recorded his sorowe in the tune of an olde song, whyche he founde written of longe tyme by a poete, shodd with the same iron, and wounded with a semblable weapon; the ende of whyche dolerus recorde seamed to importe suche soddaine consolation, that, havyng thereby (as it were a presente pasport of his former passion) gave judgement with theym that are stricken with the serpentes of Tarrantyne, that musicke is a chiefe meane to breake the bedd of fancie, and prevente dispair readie to invade the dowtefull mynde. Whyche gave hym corage, eftesones, to commence a seconde harmonie, whose ende stirred upp a remembraunce of hys former sorowe, and, restoring a freshe alaram of hys amarus thoughtes, made hym ymediatly abandon his lute and bookes of musicke. And goynge to bedde he accompted some ease to lye hidd under his canapie, hopinge that, being oppressed with sleepe, the conceite of his dreame,

Love.

servynge as a lokynge glasse for contemplacion of his mistres, wolde bringe hym some contentement and dispence of his dollor. Whyche, as it is a kynde of colde consolacion and pleasure of no greate delite, with lesse continuance, so it includes comparison of the lovers estate with the order of litle children, who, when they weepe, are pleased with tryffles, delytinge more in the lollynge of the nursse then in the offer of a monarke.

But nowe to Janiquetta, who, durynge the solitarie time and desolate aboade of Luchyn in his house, was maried, by the travell and assistance of her frendes, to a mariner, or maister of a shipp, whose trade was to conveye the marchantes of all partes from porte to porte, as their traffique and trade required. This mariage was no soner performed in the churche, but fame, fyllynge the eares of Luchyn, made hym partaker of the newes, with advyse to renewe the earneste of hys fomer bargayne wyth a doble diligence, and treble desyer, preferrynge (as it were) an assured hope of spedye victorye; the rather for that hee accompted the mariage a convenient meane to cover the falte of his fowle desier. Wherein he receyved a successe of his former attemptes: for she that detested hys indevour, beyng at libertie, thoughte the offence of doble disposicion in offendynge God and the worlde in breakynge the league of her faith and vowe of obedience to her husbande; whose simplicitie, and state subjecte to neede and lacke, Luchyn forgatt not to feede with large proffers of his frendshyppe, in suche sorte as, what with the hope of his assistance, and feare of the autoritie he bare then in the citie, he had him (as it were) in a famyliar awe, neyther suspectynge his accesse too his house, nor mislikynge his conference with his wyfe; of whome, notwithstandynge, he coulde not obteyne but the use of wordes; whyche, as she durste not denye, for the respecte of awe and honour whiche her husbande bare to hym, so havynge a notable wisdome joyned with her rare gifte of chastetie, reposynge her selfe in the grace of God to defende her honour, kepte his meanynge secrette, and woulde not communicate the fowlenes of his intente to anye, and muche lesse to her waspishe husbande; leavinge

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in example to all ladies, not sufficiente in vertue, rather to resyste all suche alarams of theymeselves, or at leaste make a secrette concealement, then, in bewraynge theyr owne weaknes, to breede a bees neste in the heads of their husbandes wyth reaportes of small substance.

But nowe the amarus traffique of Luchyn, and common haunte to the mariner's house, began to breede a doubt of his doing amongest his nearest frendes; who, not knowinge of the mariage of Janiquette, ymagyned what might happen, and (as careful gardeines of their nephewe) studied to prevent the wourste. Wherefore, leaste th' alluremente of her bewtie, and disposicion of his follie, might unhappely conclud a secret contract betwene theym, they accosted hym one day wyth earnest request, that, in ceassing at laste to pursewe the wanton instigacions of his youthe, he wolde crosse saile, and retire to a trade of honest life. 'Wherin,' saye they (verye loath to offende hym) 'albeit we have no great cause to infer ymputacion of any haynous enormytie or desorder not conveniente, yet, seinge the pleasante tyme of youre younge yeres slipp awaye under a vaile of vaine and barreine life—whose sequeile (if in tyme you abridge not the race of your ronninge course) argues no small inconvenience to your selfe, with greate discredit to your deade father—we have thought good to enter into devise for preservinge of that whyche yet remeines, and to prevent the malice of future tyme. Wherefore, accordyng to the credit and resolved truste reaposed in us by your late father (the verye remembrance of whome restores us to a speciall care and zeale of your honor and well doinge) we wishe you to convert this ydle and desolate order of living into a disposicion and desier of honest mariage; whereby you shall not only deceive th' exspectacion of the bad sorte, devyninge already of your destruction, but eschewe the sentence of ordinary mischiefe, appoynted to fall uppon suche as, wallowing in sensuall pleasures, regarde not the honor and estimacion of their house, and whiche appeares even readie to thonder upon you, if you dispatche not your selfe of the principall cause of this great and ymynente misfortune. Wherin for a declaracion of the special care we have of you, we presente

The frendes of Luchyn perswade hym to maryage and amendment of life.

Honor and livynge.

you heare wyth a franke offer of our traveile, diligence, and councel, to be ready at all tymes to assiste you in the choice of her whom God shall enjoyne you to make the lawfull companion of your bedd.'

The younge man, understanding sufficiently their intent, cutt of their further discourse wyth hys promise, not onelye to make spedie exchaunge of his former trade, but also commit hym selfe whollie to their discrecion and wysedomes; wyth resolucion to be ready to enter into mariage with such one as they judged of equalytie, and every way convenient for his condicion and calling. Wherin there was such expedicion of diligence used by his frendes, that, wythin a space of two or thre monethes, he was maried no lesse richely then honorablie, and to a bewtie sufficient to content a reasonable man. Whereof, if any rejoyced wyth good cause, I thinke it was poore Janiquette; who, perswadinge herselfe to be ryd by thys meanes of an ymportunat clyent, blessed the goodnes of her fortune in providinge so well for th'ennemye of her honor, and deliveringe her wyth honestie from the daunger of hys charmes: albeit her conceyte was aunswered wythe a contrarye successe.

And as our nature, for the moste parte, now a dayes, is growen to such corruption, by a contynual desier of filthie gaine, that (as Aristotle sayth) 'nothing is hable to satisfye the covetusnes of man'; even so th'infection of love (after hee have once prevayled above the wholesome partes in us) is of suche wonderfull operacion, that he doth not only choke the gift of our understanding, in suche sort as we are founde more apte to embrace the thinges that be hurtfull then hable to followe the loare of wisedome and vertue, but also takes awaye the respecte and dutie of our conscience; whyche you may easely descerne in the discurse of thys Luchyn, who, notwithstandinge the vowe he made to God, and honor that every man ought to geve to mariage, cold not content hym selfe wyth the companye of his owne wyfe, but renewed hys resorte wythe alarames of freshe ymportunyties to poore Janiquetta. Whyche, being noted and spied divers tymes of his wife, made her doubt that which was not. And, albeit she was resolved of a participacion and equalitie of

Nothing can satisfye the covetusnes of man.

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love, yet she feared not muche that the mariner's wife deceived her of any thinge that she accompted due to her selfe; for that the common reaport of her chaste and honeste life assured her of the contrary. Chieflye she repined that so vaine a hope shoulde wythdrawe hym from her companye, feling wyth all a certeine wante in th' accomplishment of the exercise and desier of the bedd at hoame.

The husband.

And truly as there is nothing more hurtful to the breach of amytie betwene the good man and wife then when the stronger parte convertes his affection, confirmed by vowe, into a disposicion and desier to abuse the vertue of true loyaltie, so he that huntes th' appetit of his will, and raungeth after chaunge of diot having sufficient at hoame, standes not onely in hazarde of grace afore God for vyolacion of wedlocke, but, givinge occasion to his wyfe to followe hys tracke, reapes now and then for rewarde the juste title and surname of a cockolde; bequeathinge besides to the succession of his house a dowry of perpetuall slaunder, whyche is skarcely subject to the expyracion of tyme.

Hys wyfe layd afore hym the whole circumstance of his falte, with the generall brute that passed dayly thorowe all the streetes of Jeyne, together with the wronge he did to the reputacion of the poore Janiquetta; 'whose honestie' (saith shee) 'albeit is without just cause of reprehencion, yet have you broughte it in question amongeste the slaunderous sorte, whose judgementes are alwayes accordinge to the mallice of their disposicion'; desieringe him for ende, in dismissinge his former trade to wythdrawe his accesse, least he purchased not the like preferment for himselfe that he sought to procure for an other. To whome, albeit he could not denye the frendeshippe he bare to Janequetta, yet he excused the same not to ymporte any prejudice to the behalfe of his wyfe, wyth further protestacion that Janequetta was one of the paragons of honestie that our age did norishe, and the respecte of her vertue was th' onlye cause of his admiracion, procuringe chieflye his recourse and desier of her companye. 'For the rest' (sayth he) 'the bable of the people is rather of custom then of credit, and the clerenes of my conscience takes awaye the spott of reproche, if any be;

The bable of the people is rather of custome then of creditt.

neyther can the mouthe of the slaunderor prevaile, where the integretie of the mynde offers to encounter his malice'; desieringe her to dismysse the remembrance of her grudge wythe a forgevenes of the falte; promissinge her from th'instante to correct the humour of his former follie, and become suche one on her behalfe as her honest modestie and other vertues deserved. Wherewyth he closed so sewerly the mouthe of his wyfe that longe after he lived free from the tumulte of suche quarrells, and she (not voyde of suspicion) disposed her selfe to contentmente by force, with exspectacion to see an ende of the daunce. Th'expedition wherof, exceded her ymagynacion; for, wythin a shorte tyme after, the maryner, makynge sayle into Sardynia, was incowntred by certeine pirottes and sente prisoner to Callaria, a towne subject to the Turkishe governmente, wyth no small desolacion to hys wyfe, who, as one deprived of her chiefeste stay and comforte, and overcharged wyth a nomber of litle children, whose sustentacion depended whollie uppon the travell of their father, is nowe voide of meanes to succor theym. And that whyche pinched more grevouslye was the generall darthe that overwhelmed al the land, in suche sorte, that a sacke of corne was seldome solde under nyne or ten duckattes. Whyche, arguynge greate distresse to the state of poore Janiquetta, chiefelye for that shee was denied habylitye to redeme her husbande, and also in dispair of meanes to releve her children, crynge contynuallye for meat, began to prefer in her a faintnes of corage; and the hart whome the whole assaltes of love, and longe importunityes of Luchyn, his greate presentes and proffers, with promisses of large price, coulde not once stirre or remove from the seate of constancie, feles nowe suche an alteracion of fortune, that she is at pointe to surrender (of her selfe) that, whiche neyther power nor pollecie coulde put to utterance. And albeit the extremitie of her case ministred perswacions to make an offer of her selfe to hym that of longe had served her in harte, wyth sute for her good wyll, yet, the grudge of so greate an offence, preferrynge argumentes to the contrary, wylled her rather to exchaunge her presente lyfe, and former renowme wyth death, then live with the

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spott of so fowle an acte. Wherin, waighinge thus in the ballance of doubteful ymaginacions, pinched extremely with two of the greatest plages of the world, the lamentable noyse of her children cryenge for foode with open mouth, as the younge birde in the rooffe, complayninge in his kynde uppon hunger till he receive refreshinge at the beake of his damme, ronge of freshe in her eares; whiche preferred suche compassion to the tender harte of the desolate mother, that only their rage and infirmitye forced her to a determinacion of that whiche earste she detested to remember. A mervuelous force sewer of necessitie, who, as she is the mistres of artes, so her malice importes suche a distresse, that it makes us many tymes abuse the goodnes of our nature in committyng thynges whiche neither honor nor conscience can justifye. For what greater mischiefe coulde she have thondred uppon this pore woman, then, in depryvinge her of naturall and womanlye shame, to compel her to make sale of her honor, for the susteine of her selfe and supporte of her miserable children; whose doleful tunes, exclayming against their wretched mother, that had not to satisfye the rage of their hunger, restored her eftesones to suche pitie, that she addressed her selfe immediately to the lodgynge of Luchin; who, walkinge alon in his base courte, was no lesse astonyed to see her ther, then she ashamed to be at the point to yelde him a villanous homage, yf God had not bene the protector of her chastetie. And beynge affore him, with face and garmentes besprente and dyed with the droppes of her watery eyes, she fell flatt at his feete, yelding her honor to hys orde under thies tearmes:—

Necessetie forceth Janiquette to offer her selfe in praie to Luchin.

'Albeit, sir,' saieth she, 'the prince or capteine that hathe often somoned his enemye to surrender his hold, and he (denienge suche offers) dothe menteyne the quarrell even untill th' extreme sentence of warre, which is fyer or famine, ys forced at laste to strike saile and hange oute a flagge of submission, may (by all lawe of armes) put hym to the sworde, and his citie to utter saccage, yet the glorye of that conquest will appeare greater, and honour the capteine with treble fame, if, in preferryng compassion affore the rigour of justice, he admitt the captives to favour, sparing to spill the

blood of suche as willinglie yelde their heades to the blocke under the stroke and edge of his sworde. Neither is any man (of what degree soever he be) of suche commendacion eyther for his corage, bowntie, or other qualities and ornamentes of nature, as worthelye honored with veneracion for the gifte of compassion and pitie; whiche, as it is a vertue excedynge all the reste, so (by the advise of the scripture) shee is chiefly to be declared on the behalfe of such wretches, as, fallen into daunger and distresse by offendynge the prince or his people in office, have nothing to prevent the malice of the lawe and juste meede of their deserte, but th'expectacion and hope in the frutes of so precious a vertue. I saye thusmuch (sir) to sturre upp your humor of compassion, and, dismissing the remembrance of all offences paste, to extende presente pitie to your poore Janiquette, who, if ever she offended you, is here come to yelde her to your mercie; and, takynge such vegance as you thynk good, to ymploye her further in the service that beste maye lyke you. Onely I commende unto your goodnes the wretched state of my children, whose miseries, accompained wyth a contynuall crye for releefe, hath here presented me prostrat at your feete, kissing the same with no lesse humylitie then signe of submission, wythe request eftsones to accept the offer of your hande-mayde in recompence of the wronge I have heretofore don you; but chiefly (alas!) to redeme my children from the rage and vyolence of hounger, and prolonge their lyves that oughte not yet to take ende by the lawe and course of nature.'

Luchyn abstained from vyolacion of Janiquetta.

Here love and pitie seamed to quarrell wythin the harte of Luchyn; the one, puttinge the praye into his handes, provoked hym to croppe the frutes of his longe desier; the other, defendinge the cause of the wretched captive, preferred perswacions to the contrarye, puttinge hym in remembrance that the glory can not bee greate, where the victorye is won by unlawfull meanes, neyther colde he tryumphe in a better conqueste then, in overcommynge hym selfe, to dismisse her wythout vyolacion. Wherfore, comparing her former constancie with the extreme causes that procured her presente offer, respectinge also the duetie of hys owne conscience, did

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not only determyne to assiste her povertie wyth succor of sustentacion, but also to absteine hys handes from deflowringe so rare a paragon. Wherewyth hee tooke her from the grounde, and kissing her watery chieke, sayde unto her:—'Do awaye these teares of dule, and convert the remembrance of auncient sorowe into an unfayned hope of present consolacion. Reapose your selfe upon the vertue of your invincible chastetie, and ymagyne you have received the due meritte of the same; for, for my parte, God forbidd that the malice of your presente necessitie (yeldynge you into my handes) shoulde make me greedie to get that whyche love colde not conquere nor spoyle you of, the thinge whych I oughte, and will, holde in chiefe veneracion. Wherin, being thus, by your vertue, made maister of myself, I fele also mortefied in me the wanton suggestions which earst moved me to love only the bewtie and body of Janiqueta; and now that reason is become my guide, and distresse rather then love hathe made you thus prodigal of your honor, for the sustentacion of your children, yt shal suffice me to have you at my commaundement, withoute anye affore of wronge to your estimacion or honestie. And as your chastetie doth challenge her rewarde, so—because it is you that is to glory in the gifte of so greate a vertue, and I to yelde tribute for that treason I have wroughte you—I assure you here, in the mouthe of a gentleman, not onely to furnish you of all thinges necessarie, with honor and estymacion equall to myne owne sister, but also to be as carefull of your reputacion, as heretofore I have soughte to seduce and spott it with lascivious infamy.' Janiquetta was restored here to doble contentment, bothe to have her pudicitie respected, and undowted assurance of the liberall promisse of the curteous Luchyn. Whych she woulde eftsones have acknowledged with an humble prostitucion and kissinge of his feete, but that he (not liking such supersticious reverence) prevented her intente, and presented her by the hande unto his wife wyth these wordes:—

Luchyn comforteth Janiquetta.

'Because the conceite of the jeleus mynde is seldome satisfyed til the cause of the suspicion be cleane taken awaye, and that the grudge is never appeased till th' offendor

Luchyn presenteth Janiquetta to his wyfe.

be punished, I have here broughte you the cause of your greatest doubt, with the vision that so many nightes hathe appered in youre dreame and broken the sweete course of your naturall sleepe, enjoyninge you full authoritie to commit her to what penance you will, givinge the stroke of vengance at your owne discrecion.' To whom she aunswered, that if she had no more cause to be dowbtfull of his doinges then raison to bee jelous of the honestie of the poore woman, she had beene as free from suspicion as far from cause of disquiet; neyther had her eyes anye cause to complaine of th' impediment of sleepe, nor her braine so often assailed wyth the alaram of hollowe dreames: 'for th' experience and proofe of her vertue' (sayth shee) 'dyd alwayes assure mee of her honestye, whyche yett wyll not stowpe to the malice of thee tyme, nor loase the glorye of her renowmee, althoughe fortune have layde her heavye hande uppon her in takynge awaye her husbande.' Whiche temperat modestie in hys wyfe doubled his affection, wyth confyrmation of a sincere good wyll towardes her for ever. And, in recitinge the laste chaunce and discourse passed betwene hym and Janiquette, he saide that if she knewe in what sorte he had kepte his fayth towarde her, she woulde not doubte to put hym on the phile of moste true and loyall husbandes; willynge her to take her and furnishe her with all provision, and other thinges necessarie, with no lesse care and liberall allowance then if it were for his deare sister. Whereunto she put no lesse expedicion then her selfe had cause to rejoyce in the honeste continencye of her husbande. All whiche, beinge made immediatly a common brute thorowe the citye, became also of greate wonder amongest the people; aswel for that th' instigation of harde necessitie had made Janiquette ployable to that which she hath longe refuced with great detestation, as also for the heroicall vertue of the gentleman; who, abhorring the wicked offer of fortune and time, converted his lascivious desier, norished in his intralles by so longe contynuaunce, into a disposicion of vertue contrarie to the exspectation of all men. An example, suer, worthie of greate veneracion, and wherin the sensuall appetites are so restrayned and governed by the rule of

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Xenocrates refused a yong maid layed in bedd with hym.

raison, that I doubte whether the Romaines have noted more continencye in their Fabia, Emilya, or Scipyo, or the Grecians in theyr olde Xenocrates—who is not so meritorious of commendacion (for that, being charged with yeres, he made a proffe of his chastetie) as this Luchin, who, in the glorie of his age, and full of the hoatt humours of youth, made a conqueste of his affections, wyth a wonderfull showe of vertue, and undoubted signe and assurance of the perfection of his fayth. For whych cause I have noted unto you his hystorye; which also I wyshe myghte serve to sturre upp the fraile youthe of our dayes to the ymitacion of the lyke vertue; remembryng, by the viewe of this discourse, that the sensuall appetites, and provocacion of the fleshe, are not of suche force but they are subjecte to correction; neyther is love so invincible but the wise and vertuous man maye kepe hym alwayes in awe, so that he give hym not so muche libertye at the first, nor creaditt to muche the instigation and humour of his owne fancie.

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The CRUELTIE of a WYDOWE in enjoyninge her woer to a pennance of thre yeres losse of his speache, the foolish loyaltie in hym in performinge her commaundemente, and the meane wherby he was revenged of her rigour.

GEFFRAIE FENTON'S

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THE ARGUMENT

Whose youth and yeres of folly have made an experience of the disposition of love, and suche as he infecteth with hys frantyke poyson; tryenge in like sorte the difference betwene the vanities of the worlde and the contemplacion of celistiall thinges, or other vertues of divyne operacion upon earthe, openinge (as it were) to all degrees of mortalytie an entrey or way to come to the glorye and honor of th' everlastinge Paradise above,—to suche (I saye) maye I boldely appeale for confirmacion of th' auncient opynion grounded in the stomakes of men from the beginning, that the bewtie and flattering behaviour of a woman is the true and natural *adamant*; seing that that stoane (by a certeine vertue attractive, and speciall gifte by nature) hath not such power to force and drawe the heavye yron into it, as the secret misterie, hydden in the eyes and face of a woman, are of authoritie to sommon and steale th' affections and hartes of men; which hath wrought a resolucion, or thinge of most certeintie, amongest a nomber of men now a dayes, that such charmes and serpentine alluramentes were sente amongeste us frome above, aswel to tormente our pleasure, as also (in some sort) to geve ease to th' affliction of such as are unhappelie contrybutors to that poysoned participacion. Wherin, as we have long marveiled why Parys forsoke the delites of Troye to become the thrall of Helene in Greece, what moved one Hercules to abandon his heavye mase and clubb of conquest to depende whollye uppon the commaundement of his women frende, or howe Salomon abused the gifte of his wisedome to commit follie with her, who only governed him that guided the whole monarkye; so behold! I have heare to encrease your wonder with a true poortrayte, or picture, of a more force in a woman, and folly in a man, who, without any use of former, or

hope of future, favor, savinge to fullfill the appetit of his folishe mystres, habandoned the use and benefytt of his speche for thre yeres, putting on (by that meanes) the shapp of brutalitie; betwene whom and the creatures of understandinge, the philosophers conclude an only difference of the use of reason and speache. A case (sewer) no lesse notorious for the raryetie that waye then declaringe a singuler force of nature in the subject upon whom shee seames to bestowe suche preheminence above all other misteries uppon earth. Whereof may serve for sufficiente proofe th' effeminate alteracion in Hercules, the decrease of strengthe in Sampson, the losse of wisedom and understandynge in Salomon, and the simplicitie of this gentleman whose discourse foloweth.

AMONGESTE the lymytrophall townes, confynynge the borders of Pyemount, no man dowtes (I thinke) that the citie of Thuryn, beinge th' only lanterne to geve light to al the provinces there aboute for civill orders and integritie of conversacion, is not, also, a chief rampier and sewer bulwarke to her owne countrey agaynst th' incurcion of enemyes. Neyther is it of lesse estimacion for the naturall scituacion of the place, then bewtified greatly by th' industrius endevor of man, addinge (as it seames) a more decoration, of late, to that towne then eyther nature or the slender devise of men in tymes passed colde ymagyn.

Somewhat without the suburbes of this riche and populus citie, is planted, in a pleasant valley, a little village called Montcall, worthie every way to be joyned in neighbourhead to so great a citie, being environed on th' one side with the fragrant ayre of the fertil feldes, al to bedewed with the sondry swete smelles of th' incense of Aurora, and on th' other side with the loftie hilles, breathing from the mouth of Zephire the ayre of health, to refresh in time of nede the drowsie tenants of the valley; which (amongest other

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happie influences of the heavens) semed also to have a special favor of the godes to bring furth and norish the most faire, verteous, curtoyse ladyes that cold be found in any one corner of Europe. Amongest whom, notwithstanding, there was not long since a young widow called Zilya; who, declyning from the disposition of the clymat and planet of her nativitie, became so hagarde-lyke, and enclyned to crueltie, that she semed rather to take her begining among the desertes and craggie places of Scavoye, then too sucke the brestes of the delicat norsses in the pleasante champayn, refreshed by the beautifull hande of Erydan—sometyme called the father of ryvers, and nowe termed by the title of Po—whose christall channells and silver streames (devydynge theymselves into divers distillinge brokes) do not onelye drive men into admiration, but also draw theym to become neighbours to a licour of suche delite. This disdainefull widowe, and enemye to all curtesie, although she hadd as yet skarcely entred into the twentie-and-fourthe yere of her age, yet she perswaded her selfe herafter to abandon utterly the societie of man, whether it were by mariage or otherwaies, advowing to spende the remeynder of her yeres in singlenes of lyfe; a resolucion (truly) bothe godly and commendable, yf the tiklishe motions of the fraile fleshe woulde be contente to obey the wholsome exhortacions of the sprite.

But whereas our declynyng bodyes, pampred in all delicacye, together with the unruly appetites ragynge after wilfull desier, doo seme to quarrell with our chastetie, and vanquishe all resistance, the councell of th' apostell is to be followed; who willes that we marie in Christe, to avoyed the daunger of the sowle, and common slaunder of the world. She, also, after she had alredie performed the due debte of her dutie to the deade bodye of her husbande, whome she accompayned to the grave with abundance of teares and other funerall dule, soughte not (accordyng to the trade of young wydowes, now a dayes, lefte without controlmente) to abuse the benefitte of her libertie, or dispose the tyme of her wydowehead in other exercise then in augmentacion of the patrimonye lefte to her litle sonne, and enryche herselfe

by the travell of her owne handes. Wherein she became soo covetouse and gredie of gayne, that, cuttynge of her ydle traine of loyterers (haunting commenly the houses of great men) she onely reserved suche for the necessarye members of her housholde, as, with the sweate of their browes, refused not the toile of any honest travel. Neither made she conscience to trade up the delicat trowpe of gentlewomen attendynge upon her in th' affaires of house-keping, and other honest exercises of the hande; to whom she was alwayes a companion herselfe, thinking nothing so well don as that which passed in the presence of her eye, or with th' assistance of her owne hande: wherin, certeynly, her vertue was no lesse meritorius then her endevour commendable. For the office of a mother or mystres of families, consistes not only in kepyng her servantes to continuall travaile, or taking accompte of their doings and daie's labour; but, stretching further, she is enjoyned (according to th' advise of Salomon) to a straiter charge, to assiste th' indevors of her people with the helpe and diligence of her owne bodye; seinge her advise is no lesse necessarie for the perfection of the worke, then her presence and help therein a speciall incitacion, encoraginge the servantes not to desiste from toile till their taske be performed, and that to th' exspectacion of her desier. Neither ought any degree be dispenced with all from honest exercise, seynge th' ymitacion of travell is deryved from our Savior Christ, who, exposing his body to al toile, grudged not to undertake those painful endevors which th' appostells refused to endure; leaving an example to all estates to ymitat honest toile (which, by the mouth of th' appostell, he dowteth not to terme a singuler vertue), promising a rewarde of perpetuytie, with a contynuall reste in the bosom of Abraham, to those that unfeynedlye do folowe it. But towchynge those delicate and wanton housewives, whiche thinke their estymacion ympaired, if they but put their noses within the aire of painefull indevor; they, I saye, beyng hurtefull to a whole commonwealthe, oughte either to be utterly weded out of the companie of the good sorte, or els traded up in the skooles of contynuall travell, untill the frutes of the same

Gentlewomen ought to be skilful in hous-keping.

The charge of a mistris or governor of housholde.

do adorne their estates whiche they accompte dymynished by th' exercise of that most honest vertue. Wherein, yf th' auncient historians and fathers of knowledge, beynge carefull to provoke the youth of their tyme to the followyng of vertue, dyd painte the office and dutie of a good houswife in the person of one Lucrecia—whom they have neyther made a bablor or one that spendes her tyme in chattinge of vaine things, ronnyng to feastes and banquettes, gasinge oute of the windowes uppon every streete-walker, or masquyng in the nightes with covered face, without regarde of honestye or honor of the house wherof she cam; but have drawen her sitting in her chamber amongest her young damesels using the spindel and exercise of the nedell—even so, wee nede not, me thynke, doute also to admitt as a familiar myroir for you coye gentlewomen of this age, oure younge wydowe Zylia; who, deviding the daye into howers, and howers into mynutes, wolde not suffer the leaste moment of tyme to eskape withoute some exercise of comendacion or proffitt. Wherein she was so earnestly given, that the hollydayes, or seasons of solemnytie, cold not discharge her bodye from labor, or make her be sene in tyme of recreacion, eyther in the streetes, gardynes, or other convenient places of resorte, convenient for honest assembly to recreat their weary bodyes and refreshe their spreetes dulled with travell.

Which vertue, if it bee to be honorred, for the rarietie in our dames now a daies, yet had she another gifte of no lesse commendacion, whiche she semed not to attaine unto without the helpe of th' Egipcians theologie; who, resolving upon certeine honeste partes whiche oughte to adorne the beautye of a vertuouse and chast woman, have drawen th' image of a woman holding a keye affore her mouth, and her feete upon a whele; notinge, thereby, that an honest woman hath always her lippes locked and her toung tyed, to th' end she utter no wordes of vaine disposition, nor speake not but in tyme and place convenient, and her feete chayned to a wheele, because they should not use their libertie to wander as vacabondes, no! nor sturr out of the house, onlesse it were for religion sake, to visit the

churches or places of prayer, or nowe and then to render dutie to theime of whome we tooke our beinge and came into this worlde. Wherein this wydowe, exactinge uppon the straite pointes of those commendable customes, was not so religious as supersticious, or rather wholly given to rigour; for she used her devocion of prayer at suche secrett tymes, that it was skarce possible to see her when she wente to heare the divine service of God; and whether it were that she thought her self so faire that al men weare unworthie to touche the precious brinke of her corrall mouth wyth a chast kisse, or whether the renowme of her rare chastetye made her strange in condiscendinge to that whiche was tollerable, and decente enough to be admitted, yet was she suche a nigarde of her curtesie, that she wolde make no conscience to denie to kisse any gentleman of what condicion so ever he were; an aunciente civilitye used of longe tyme amongeste all estates, and continued to this daye (as a behaviour of tolleracion) amongeste the dames of greate calling, accomptyng it a chiefe kynde of humanitie to receive and welcome strangers, commynge to visitt theim for good wyll, wyth a chaste kisse, accompanied wyth a countenaunce of semelye familiaritie. But now, as this wydowe had layde her husbande in his longe bedd of reste, there to remeine untill the generall resurrection of all fleshe, the dollorous disposition of her funerall dule retired into oblivion, and she, whollye given to treade the path of painefull toile (aswel for the sustentation of her selfe and her charge, as increase of the patrimonie lefte to her litle sonne) it chaunced that a gentleman of the moste estimacion of that contrey, called Monsieur Phillibarto Virley, whose house was nexte neyghbour to Montcall, came uppon a holly daye, or greate feaste, to Montcall. And beinge in the churche there, in place of occupyinge his minde with heavenly cogitacions, or recordynge with attentive eare the infallible worde of God, published that daye in the pulpitt by a preacher of the learned sorte, he bestowed his devocion in beholdynge the glymerynge saintes in the bodye of the churche: amongeste whome hys unfortunat eyes tooke to large a viewe of the exquisitt beautye of Zilya; who, havinge

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Parentes.

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alreddye removed the vaile of dollor, and because it was veray hott, and that she woulde gyve her selfe large libertie to heare the ghostly father, tooke alwaye her *eskarfyon*, and other implementes incident to preserve the beautie of the face of the effeminate sorte, and unbared her cristall necke, nothing differyng from the complexion of her face, beinge bothe dipped in the Orient dye of the pure allablaster, tempered wyth certeine lively streames of redd, like unto the incarnate rose springing uppon the brymme of the pleasante arbour in the dewishe mornynges of Maye: which pleasant glaunce and unhappie encounter so daselled the eyes of the knighte at the firste sighte, that, beinge not hable to wythdrawe his regardes from the viewe of so fayre a sainte, was driven at laste (in makynge the ynner partes of his mynde a table whereupon he drewe the curious picture of her beautie) to admitte th'infection of that pleasante allurement into the bottome of his harte: wherin, beinge once harboured it began (accordyng to the nature of a deadly poyson) to worke by lytle and lytle, untyll the distillinge jewste, dropping from the pernicious humour of that perillous fountayne, had drowned and gott dominion over the beste partes within this unfortunat patient; who even nowe felte suche straunge alteration in hym selfe, suche newe affections quarellynge wyth his former quiet, and all his bodye possessed of so unruly a gueste, that, beinge at the ende of his wittes to ymagyn the cause, was no lesse hable to withstand the ill then moderate the furie of his new fever, but miserablye had lefte his life in gage, if Fortune her selfe had not become the phizicion to his disease: whereof you shal have large relacion in the due place of this historie. But duringe the time of the sermon, and all the matutinall prayer, our unhappie Phillyberto wavered in contrarietye of thoughtes, reservynge, notwythstandyng, his eyes assuredly and firmly fixed upon her who makes no more accompte of theim that regarde her wyth suche greate admiration, then they theim selves of their lives and libertye, committynge rashelye twoo suche precious jewels betwene the merciles handes of so cruell a woman; of whose estate, condicion, trade, and order of lyvynge, this

Phillyberto falleth in love with the wydowe.

newe enamored Virley (beinge comme from the churche to his lodging) forgatt not to make diligent inquisition; which (as oyle to light his matche) retourned unto him a generall reaporte of her honestie. Wherein beinge confirmed by the mouth of every man, he made no conscience immediatlye to proclayme her the soveraine ladye of his life, and th' only disposer of his secret thoughtes.

And yet, amongste the sondrie commendacions gyven to her vertues, he was made t' understande, by secret information of some deare and familyar frendes, of th' incivilitie, with certeine unsemelye pointes of unnaturall discourtesie, raignynge in her. Whiche, albeit suspended his resolution for a tyme, occupying his doubtfull mynde with varietye of cogitacions, yet, seinge his destynie had alredye enjoyned him to be a thrall to her beautye—for the whiche he had alredye put his libertye as a pawne betwene the handes of hym, who, havinge once gotten the hartes of men within the jurisdiction of his durance, will not release their imprisonment, nor restore their libertye so sone, nor when they wishe it—he determined to pursewe th' ende of his enterprise, committyng hym selfe to be guyded by the favor of Fortune, and the successe of his indevor, to the good wil of love; who, leadyng hym thorowe the blynde vale of vaine hope, and ticklynge hym by certeine argumentes or liklihodes of good spede, to make hym mery for the tyme wyth the conceite of his owne phantasie, willed hym to put hys intente uppon tearmes; whereby, and wyth the continuance of his longe service, he semed to assure him at last to wreste the good wil of the wydow to th' appetite and exspectation of hys desyer. Wherein, for his firste entrye into his laborinth of miserable toyle, he committed th' order of his owne house at Virley, and affaires of importance, to the direction of others, and determined his abode at Montcall, to th' ende that, if in plantyng his batterye, nor with th' assistance of th' uttermost of his force, he coulde make no reasonable breache into the forte whiche he ment to assaile (in the wynnyng wherof him selfe was most in daunger to be first taken), yet, at the least, he might recreat and solace hymselfe with the contemplacion

He was made t'understande of th' incivilitye of the wydowe.

Love.

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of an ymage of so rare and excellente beautye; the remembrance whereof, seamyng rather to double his greefe then give moderacion to his passion, served more to stirre up the malice of that poisoned humour of love then to repulse the furie of his new fever; and lastely, preferring absolute arguments of his perentorye destruction, offred divers likli-hodes of future disquiet for the latter remeinder and residue of his yeres yet to comme. And, being now becomme a citizen of Montcal, he began to haunte the churche above his ordinarie, not so much, peradventure, for any fervente zeale he had to prayer or invocation to God, as for the amarus devocion he oughte to his newe sainte; whose presence, albeit he could not enjoye but in the body of the church, and that in times of preaching and publike service of the Lorde, yet did he refraine to make the house of God a place to communicat his practis of love, persuading him self th' offence to be to heynous to defile the sacred temples and holly places dedicated to the highest with any spot of villanie, and specially with attemptes of such folly: being chieflye forbidden by the mouth of our Saviour, 'Domus mea, domus orationis vocabitur,' 'My house shal be called the house of praier, and not a den for adulterers or theves, nor place to practise any iniquitie or synne.' Wherein, albeit the zeale of religion forbadd hym to use conference wyth her in the churche, yet the pearcing stinge of affection openyng hym an other meane, putt hym in remembrance to attende duelye her commynge out; where, with greate humilitye, he offred his service often times in beynge her guyde to her lodgyng. Whiche as he forgat not to performe with al the curtesie and semly behavior he colde ymagyn, so, notwithstandinge al the vehement perswacions he colde inferre for th' accomplishment of his desier, yet reaped he thereby no more contentemente, nor meanes to qualefie his greefe, then she tooke pleasure in hearinge the discourse and loyall offer of his unfayned good will. For she, as a cruell enemye to curtesie, faynyng not to understande what he sayde, replied to all his allegacions of love wyth some conference of housewyverye or housekepyng. Wherewith, tornyng the carte against the horse, he became

no lesse amased at her overthwart reasons then she seamed to take pleasure in the teares of his complayntes. Whyche argewed, not only colde compforte in the sute of the wooer, but also ymynent occasion of hys owne destruction, yf, by th'assistance of some other meane, he avoyded not with expedicion the sondrie illes that threatned to thunder upon him. Wherefore, devisinge certeinne banquettes and gossepmetynges, at hys lodging, of divers of the burgess wyves of that towne, he entred thereby into the good opynion of certeine dames that were no lesse familiar with the rigerous Zilya. Amongest whom he chused out one whose bossome he thoughte to make the regester of his secret, with entente to impart with her both the cause of his dollor, and the meane to mitigate the same in bewrayinge his greefe to her that was the fountaine and occasion of his presente passion. To her then (beyng his nexte neyghbor) no lesse subtill of her owne inclynacion, then well experienced in suche affaires (neyther ignorante what dishe they feede uppon that sitt at the table of love, nor what bitter taste those brothes comonly have which Cupide brueth for his guestes) he addresseth him selfe, conjurynge her, in the firste place of his preamble, too make councel of the cause of hys complainte. Wherewith entring into the discourse of his love, conceiles notwithstandyng the name of his ladie, untill he hard the aunswere of his neighbour, who, perceivynge alredie the marke whyche he shott at, offred him frankelie her helpe to th'uttermoste of her power. Whereof she gave hym assurance by promisses of large skope, that, in consideracion of the honestie whiche she had noted in hym hitherunto, she wolde not faile to bestowe her endevour everye waye to th'advancement of his desier. 'Wherein (sir)' saieth she, 'although my offer seame more liberall on your behalfe then your meanynge plaine unto me, yet I hope you will conster my wordes to an honeste ende, and not abuse the readynes of my inclinacion to do you good in any travell of reasonable consequence, wherein it shall please you to employ me.' To whom this carefull knight, after he had given her the choice of a thousand thanks, and perswaded her eftesones to a secretnes touching his practise (fearynge yet to disclose the

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Seigneur Philliberto woeth his neighbor to solicite his love to Zylia.

name of his mistres) roved at her in thys dark manner:— 'My case, alas!' saith he, 'differeth not much from the condition of the pollitike capteine, who, goyng aboute to give th'assalte to a fortresse or place of defence, beyng careful to kepe his soldiours from slaughter or the bochers bowle, planteth his ordinance and battery in the face of the forte, to th'end that the place, beinge made assaltable by the helpe of the cannon, the soldiours maye more saffelie give charge upon the walles, and performe the exspectacion of their capteine; even so, for my parte, havinge drawen a greate deale of tyme to ende in the longe siege of a forte, no lesse stronge then the stonnye rocke, whose hardnes, resistyng the force of all shotte, makes, also, lyke accompte of the valiante corage of my soldiours (whereof I have alredye loste the greatest nomber in divers skirmishes given me by my pleasante enemye) am driven in th'ende to flee unto you for helpe for the performance of this warr; to th'ende that, with th'assistance of your councel and travaile, I may be hable to make an approche, and entre the place whyche hetherunto hathe repulsed all my assaltes.'

But she, not hable to conster the mistery of his comparaison, desiered hym to committ the meanyng of his ridle to tearmes of playner understandynge. 'For,' sayeth she (some what smiling) 'I was never norished amongest the oracles or dreame readers of auncient tyme, nor tasted of the conning of Edipus, neyther have I muche bene traded in the exercise of warr, or acquainted wyth the use of armes, a thynge impropre and farr unsemely for our secte.' To whome he replied, in fewe wordes, that the laborinth of that warre whiche he mente, was no lesse naturall then common. 'Neither doubte I' (saith he) 'but some tyme in youre lyfe you have proved what traines maye be used to entrapp the ennemy, wyth what canvisadoes the trenche maye be soddainly invaded, what secrett ambushes maye be layde to vanquishe force by pollecie, and what meanes are to be used every waye, as wel by th'assailante as defendante.' Whereunto she aunswered with a semblable similitude derived of the like occasion, chieflye to encorage this fainte soldiour to continue his new warre; saying that, as far as she coulde

The aunswer of hys neyghbour.

discerne, there lacked nothing but th'assurance of the felde. DISCOURSE XI
'Seinge' (saieth she, with a familiar showe of pleasante cheare) 'we are alredye in pointe to entre the combat, and albeit all your pollecie in devisinge bulwarkes, square and rounde, mountes of greate heighte and well rampired, are not hable to batter the place; and the subtill mynes under the earth, and other mertiall engines, lacke force against the strength of the ennemy, nor in no sorte to favor your enterprise; nor your trenches artificiallie made, prickt full of perillous flankars, are hable to amase the capteine of the forte; no! nor the sondry terrible assaultes gyven by your desperate soldiors will procure eyther parley or composition; yet' (saieth this mery dame) 'let us not rewarde our longe warre with a shorte shame, nor sell the glorye of so great a victorye for so vile a price as faintnes of corage, but let us eftesones renewe the conflicte wyth freshe supplies, and sende to somon the forte by the mouth of the canon, whose message, I warrant you, the capteine will not denye.

'Albeit, because in plainlye understandynge your intente, I maye frankely imploye my endevour, I praye you dismisse thies darke *Apothegmacs* of warr and open your meanyng simplie: for I greve, on your behalfe, to see you converted into suche alteracion, whyche makes you seeme utterly to degenerate from your auncient modestie and wisdome.' Whereof he desiered her not to merveile, seynge that, accordynge to the dispocition of the accidente, the condicion and state of men do commonly chaunge and alter. 'For I am become' (sayth he) 'subjecte and bounde to one that hath made me in none other takinge then those unhapie wretches that be tormented with deviles; who, as they can neyther saye nor do any thing, but by the permission of the sprite that possesseth theym, even so this cursed enchaunter love hathe gotte suche power over all the partes in me, that he alone commaundes me by power and authoritie, and I obey by awe and feare. He enjoynes me penaunce at hys pleasure, and I endure the paine and dare not complaine. He, alas! promysed me contentmente, and nowe payeth me with doble annoye. He offred to assiste me, and leaves

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me in th'extremetye of my distress. Yea! in place where I oughte to use argumentes of moste audacitie, it is there that he deprives me of all corage and leaves me withoute countenance. And, beynge alone, God knowith howe valyantly I invade the place which I darr skarcely behold with open eye when mine enemy is in presence. Is it not pitie, alas! to see one manne distressed with so manye diverseties at one instante, procedynge onely of the ragyng appetit of one symple affection? Neyther wolde I grudge at the heavie burden of thyes passions, nor sticke to indure a thousande more evilles, if eyther sufferance wolde make my service acceptable, or tyme purchase the merite of my martirdome: but whereas there appeares nothynge but uncertentie, with argumentes everye waye of evyll successe, and I in the mean tyme (accordynge to the Cameleon, lyvynge with the breathe of the ayre) doo feede but uppon the offer of vayne ymaginacions, what is there to kepe me oute of the daunger of dispaire; savynge that th' unfortunate sorte are contente to ymparte (towarde the moderacion of my greefe) some of their solace; whyche is to feede for the tyme uppon the pleasante conceite of phantasye and flickeringe offers of vaine hope, attendynge that some good God will laye in my lapp th' assistance of a loyall frende, that wyll eyther shot the gates of this hell agaynste me, or at leaste procure the spedie dispence of my tormente, by cloasing my eyes from the light of this world? Which I wishe with no lesse farvent affection, then the sicke man desiereth with ymportunitie to be dispatched of his paine.' Which he accompanied wyth such a dollerus peale of sighes, that his stomake and harte, being redie to take their leave of the breath of life, seamed to pant like a paire of bellowes, blowinge the fournace of some fyerie forge. Neyther forgat his eyes to set open the windowes of their conduites, and gushe oute a whole river of teares; whych, beinge drayned from the bottome of hys bellie, ascended to the uppermost partes to fynd out their naturall issue, to th' ende that, wyth the retire of these drayninge humors, his life mighte also vanishe, as in a slomber or quiet qualme. Whych moved such a pitie in his neighboure on the behalfe of his dollor, that she was

forced to kepe him company with semblable kindnes, offer- DISCOURSE XI
inge eftesones her helpe under these tearmes:—

'Albeit' (saith she) 'the regarde of myne honestie, with th'estimacion of the place which I holde without blushinge amongest the troupes of honor and dames of great calling in this citie, do forbidd mee the enterprise of any thinge that myne honor can not brooke, yet the sorowefull sommonce of your laste complainte, tempred wyth so manye tunes of dolefull note, hathe filled me so full of compassion on your behalfe, that I will not dowt to laie my conscience to gage for the redresse of your present affliction. Wherein, if you will give me the charge of my commission, tellinge me what it is that I shall do for you, you shall see my endevor shal be no lesse frankelye emploied for you then I knowe, by the viewe of myne owne eyes, that your passion is simple and withoute all dissimulation. Onely there restes that I know what she is to whom you have avowed so large a devotion. For I promise you to salute her so amplie with the reaport of your loyaltie and service, whiche I knowe you owe to her that is the mistres of your harte, that, oneles her mouth be utterlye out of taste, and th'appetit of curtesie cleane taken from her, she shal not refuce th'offer of your good will, which I thinke is without a seconde in any place of the worlde. His neighbour makes a second offer of her helpe.

'And trulye, albeit diverse women, nowe a dayes, have good cause to inveighe by complaintes against the disloyaltye of men, yet this ladye, whome you seme to honour so muche, hathe neyther cause to mislike her choice, nor reason to refuce the consent and offer of your service. Whereof as the earthe semes a verye nigarde to brynge furthe and norishe so fewe of your disposition; so it can not be chosen but pure loyaltye, for lacke of harbor within the hartes of moste men, muste retire and seke her a newe habitacion within the delicate intralles of us women; who, embracynge no lesse that vertue wyth deare affection, then desyerous to expose unfained frutes of the same, are accompted to be cladde in the habite of crueltie, if we seeme to stande uppon our garde, and expulse th'assaulte of that frivolus and fleshelye crewe of vaine lovers; who, profferinge theyr service

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under a masque of fayned teares and sighes of double deceite, with other courtelike importunytyes, do bende the pollecie of all their practises to none other ende, then to abuse the favor whiche they fynde at theyr handes, that unhappelye committe their honor to the kepinge of those *sycophantes*, and common enemies to the renowme of all ladies.' 'Ah good madam' (sayth he) 'although my lytle hablenes denies me sufficient meanes to measure the rewarde of your franke offer accordynge to the meritt of your great curtesie, yet, beholde! heare a soldiour and gentleman, bounde to be no lesse prodigall of his lyfe, and spende the deareste dropp of his blodd in your service, then you seme liberal of your estimation for the appeasyng of his greff. And seyng your promisse is so farr past, by wordes of confirmation, to do your beste for me, as the same ymportes an assured hope of spedie helpe to comme by our meanes, the chiefest thyng that I committ to your frendshipp is to deliver a letter from me to Madame Zylia; whose beautie hath alredye made suche a breache into my harte and brued the broth of the tormente which you see I suffer, that, onelesse I be spedie releved, I do not se but that the thre fattals, weary with drawing furthe the spindell of my lif, wil ymediatly cut a sonder the twiste, whiche hanges onely by the hope of your succours, in purchasyng me favor with her that hath made me captiff in the prison of her commandement.' Wherwith the faithfull burgoise, beynge verie sorie that so honeste a gentleman had sowen the seedes of his good will in the soile of so bad increase, bringing furth but frutes of crueltie, assaied to take the worme out of his nose, in using perswacions to remove his phantasie. But he that was alredie resolved in his mishap, detested all councell, and shoote his eares from the wholesome advise of the wise matrone; who, doutyng that he wold conster her wordes contrarye to her meanyng, in thinkinge that she inferred exhortacions to purchase a releace of her promisse, willed hym to write his letter, and she wolde not only deliver it, but also bring hym a reaporte of that whiche sholde be sente hym for aunswere. 'Whereby' (saieth she) 'you shall see the litle gaine and lesse easse, that will followe the meritt

of your painefull travell, ymployed in the service of so unthankful a woman; with whom, seynge I am thorowely acquainted, and her disposicion no straunger unto me, I meane not to practise in any other sorte then to discharge the part of a messenger in delivering your letter: which, yf you have not alredie made, I shall attende your leasure, to th' ende to performe my promisse.' Wherewith he thanked her as apperteined, and beyng alone in hys chamber sommoned all hys wittes together to devise his letter, which semed to be written in thies or like tearmes:—

Philliberto writeth to his ladye.

'Yf my disease (good madame) were derived eyther of the shaking or burnyng fever, *catterres*, *apoplexies*, or any other hurtefull influence incidente commonly to annoye the partes of mannes bodye, I woulde reasorte too the councell of phisicke, and use the discipline of wholsome dyot; but wher my presente passion procedes only of the fervente affection I beare you, th' extremitie of the same denyes also to be cured by anye other remedie then the happie encounter of that which is th' originall cause of my greeff. Wherin, albeit, I halfe assure my selfe rather to receive spedie ease and ende of my tormente by the fatall domme of death, then abridgment of my dollors, or consolacion in my distresse by any indevour or affection reciprocall of you, yet am I so lynked in the laborinth of love, that I am denied, every waye, to take truce with my unrulye desiers, and lesse hable of my selfe to revoke the vowe of my unfayned devocion to your rare and heavenle beautie; in whome consistes the propper *Cataplasma* of my disease. Alas! under what crabbed constellacion was I conceived, or what cruell destenye directes the course of my yeres; seing that, in the glorie of my youthe and pryme tyme of myne age, I am, at one instante, threatned of the heavens, made subjecte to the malice of love, and readye to incurr the perilus daunger of dispaire, for wante of hope to drawe furthe the length of my dayes to th' uttermost date of my life? Whiche I thynke was formed first by nature, and continued hitherunto by consente of the goddes, to spende the future remeynder of my tyme onelye in the service of you, good madame; to whom

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herewith, as the fyrst frutes of my humble and deare zeale towardes you, I make a presente of my poore afflicted harte; which, as it is susteyned by the only viewe and remembrance of your beautie and vertue, so, beyng denied harbor at your hands, his next and laste refuge is to exspecte consolacion in death; which hitherunto I have refused and for the present do shonne, not for any horror or feare I conceyve of hys malice, but onelye to prolonge yet the course of my lyfe, to the ende that, as my mynde hath alredye vowed to serve you, so my bodye, as a necessarye instrumente, maye be whollye ymployed to the execution of your commaundementes. But yf the dedication of myne offer shall receive an unthankefull repulse, or the merite of my affectioned service sente backe with a paymente of crueltie—a vice not like to inhabite where nature and the godes have disposed so plentifullye all theyr gyftes of grace, nor incidente commonlye to creatures of so vertuouse norriture and good bringynge upp—you shall see me immediatlye suffer that which I have not deserved, and you I knowe wil be sorie for the thinge whiche you can not amende. Wherefore, seing you have the choice, both to prolonge my lif with double joye and abridge my dayes by undeserved dollor, embrace the workes of compassion, the chiefe braunches of vertue, and refuce the surname of crueltye. Wherin, I preferr eftesones this laste importunitye, to th'ende that, if my requeste be barred to enter the gates of pitye wyth you, you maye at leaste give death his dispatche; who attendes uppon the reaporte of your aunswere, to execute his charge uppon hym who wisheth you that whiche you hate, and sendes you that which he loves.—Yours more then his owne, P. Virley.'

This letter, sealed and subscribed with his owne hande, he delivered, not withoute abundance of teares, to his neyghbour; who, promisinge hym once againe to bringe him aunswere afore she slepte, went her waie, leaving the languishynge knyghte buildyng castels in the ayre, with a thousand hammors in his heade, and, tickling him selfe to make himself laughe, semed sometime to bathe his sorowes

in the joye and contentement which vaine hope offred him by visions in his flatteringe conceite. But when the lothsome ymage of the cruell incivilitie of Zilya presented her selfe in hys mynde, his pleasure retired into dule, with as manye argumentes of presente deathe as earste he ymagined liklihodes of contentement and joye, semynge to have in his eye the angrie and frownyng lookes wherewith his mistres received the comming of the messenger; who, arrived now at the pallaice of Zilya, mett her comminge oute of a gardyne on the backe side of her house, where, havynge saluted eche other, wyth equall showe of curtesye, the ladye messenger, thinkynge to preferre certeine excuses, as well to avoyde imputation whiche mighte be objected againste her unsemely execution of so badd an ambassage, as also to inferr perswacions on the behalfe of hym by whome she was sente, was prevented by the wydowe; who tolde her that she merveilled to see her there at that hower, considerynge her former conversation, whiche hath alwayes argued her to be so frendly to vertue and enemye to exercise of idlenes, that she woulde not lett slipp one mynute of tyme, wythout it were frutefullye ymployed. Whereunto the burgesse replyed with thankes for the good opinion she seamed to have of her and her doinges, with desyer to persever therin til juste occasion deserved the contrarie.

The messenger to the wydowe.

'And touching my being here at this hower' (saieth she) 'which you seame to tearme an idle vacacion, yf my message might be harde, and consydered wyth no lesse indifferencie of you then the cause of my commynge importes greate and unfayned necessitye, you woulde (I am sewer) converte that conceite into an opinyon of vertuouse inclination in me. For I am perswaded that the tyme ymployed in workes of pitye, and relevyng the afflicted and dollorous companie distressed with dule, is aswell spente, and no lesse meritorious afore God, then those momentes and seasons, joyned to the contynuall yoke of exstreme labor and toyle of the handes. Whereof I woulde presentelye presente you a particular discourse, if the reaporte of my embassage wolde not be hurtefull to the league of amytie longe ago practised betwene us.' Whereunto the curious wydowe (havynge

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alredye kindled in her harte the coles of disdaine) aunswered, wyth a countinance derived of the angrie disposition of her mallencolike mynde, that, touchynge the reaporte, she shoulde be as wearye wyth hearyng the circumstance as unwillynge to consider of the case. 'And albeit' (saith she) 'I knowe not the intente of your wordes, and muche lesse the cause of youre commynge, yet the kallendor of my mynde prognosticates the effecte of your embassage, to importe requestes of other consequence then mine honor wilbe hable to brooke. Wherefore, I praye you lett me be deceived in mine exspectation, and you so curious to kepe the league of our auncient frendshipp, that the breathe of your owne mouth do not dissolve that which earst seamed indissoluble, nor you become the messenger of reaportes that any waye maye seme indecent for a dame of your degree.'

'Madame,' sayeth the messenger, 'the lytle *simpathia* and equalitie of affection whiche seames to be in you, in comparison of the vertues of him whose solicitor I am, hath moved, I thinke, this passion in you. Notwithstandynge, for my parte, beinge no lesse sorie for the presente affliction of Monsieur de Virley, then desierous to releve his distresse with th' uttermoste of my indevor, I have undertaken the charge of a messenger to deliver this letter' (which then she takes oute of her pocket and gives to Zilya) 'unto you. Wherein, as my fayth lieth in pawne for the performance of my promise, so I beseche you, on his behalfe, refuce not his presente, accompanied wyth a franke offer of his humble service, lyf, livynge, and all that he hath, to be imployed onelye at the becke of your commaundemente. Wherein, if amongeste the other beatitudes or vertues, given us by speciall name in the scripture, the actes of charitye, wyth indevor to succour the afflicted and give consolation to the comfortles, be no lesse acceptable afore God then the reste, refuce not, madame, to releve hym, who, for your sake, hath loste his libertye, languisheth in continuall dollor, and is, for wante of releefe at your hande, to take hys leave of us wretches in this worlde. Wyth whiche juste incitacions to compassion, I joyne also this requeste of myne—that if the deserte of my frendshypp

maye fynde place of favor in you, you wyll (the rather for my sake) open and reade the letter, retournynge your aunswere by me—who hath undertaken no further but the deliverie of the same—and reaporte your resolucion touchinge the contentes of his demaunde.' Zilya, besides the crabbed inclination of her owne nature, beinge not acquainted wyth suche kinde of embassages, and lesse wonte to be courted wyth requestes of the like courtesie, began here to enter into suche a disposicion of collor, that, at the fyrste, she was readye to wreake her malice uppon the letter, committynge it into a thousande peces, and retourne the messenger without any aunswere. Albeit, reserving by chaunce some sparke of modestie, which oughte to be incidente to all women, she opened and redde the contentes of her clyante, not without signes of greate alteracion in her face, arguynge lyvelye enoughe the contrarietie of thoughtes which semed to quarel in her minde. For, within lesse then a moment of tyme, she chaunged coollor twize or thrice, some tyme pale lyke the crosse of Dyana, whiche, beinge set againste the sonne, loaseth by and by the glorye of his borowed lighte, and retourned immediatly to a crymsyne, not muche unlike the florishinge dye of the fragrante rose, glisteringe in his Orient coolour in the pleasant mournynges of the springe. Notwithstanding, havyng redd and over red wyth thies alterations, the some of his demaunde, beinge not hable any longer to conceile or moderate the passion of her yre, clawed her neyghbour wyth this crabbed aunswere:—

Zilia answereth the messenger.

'I woulde never have thoughte, that under the outwarde showe of your vertuouse conversacion, whereof you have bene no lesse noted then commended by the mouth of all men hetherunto, had lorked suche foule frutes of abhominable substance, and specially in a desier to become a colecarier of letters in the favor of love. Wherin, as you have semed to waighe the reputacion of your selfe and the renowme of mine honor in th'indifferente ballance of your owne lighte judgmente; evenso, if the lawe of frendshippe did not stopp my mouthe and make me dissymule that whych I thinke, or yf any other had bene the messenger of thies affaires, I assure you the publicacion of the facte shoulde have made

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her honour no lesse notorius and subjecte to perpetuall infamye hereafter then I seme to make deare accompte of my chastetie; which I woulde you shoulde knowe, is armed with more assurance then to be shaken with any assaltes of thies follies. Wherefore, if you be as carefull to live in quiett, withoute skandall hereafter, as I am absolutely resolved not to dimynish the title of my honor by any acte of myne owne, lett this first falte diswade you to wade any further in an enterprise of so small commendacions; seying that she that is eyther mynister or messenger in these amarouse trafficques, or a furtheror of such practises of love, is no lesse guiltie affore God and her conscience, then yf she were eyther pillowe or bolster to the detestable facte.

'And for mine aunswere to Siegneur de Virley, whose demaund I deteste no lesse then his follie deserves: if he have opened his eare to th' inchauntment of love, lett hym expulse th' ennemye with a countercharme, by raison, or elles make the beste of his owne bargaine; for, seynge hys disease commes of him selfe, let hym exspecte no consolacion at my hande; for I had rather be a frende to death then favour the leaste jotte of his demaunde. Wherein, for a confirmacion of my resolucion, I intende hensfurthe to barr hym al meanes of accesse to my presence: wherewith, on my behalfe, you maye salute hym.'

The lady messenger, seyng her selfe in this sorte clawed where it itched not, and no lesse ashamed of her sharpe repulse then sory that her medicine was of no better operacion on the behalfe of her patient, semynge notwithstandyng to be litle moved with the angrie complexion of Zylia, desiered that God wolde reduce the difference and inequalitie of their diseases into a *sympathia* and equalitie of passion,—'I meane,' sayeth the madame, 'that you maye be taken oute of this conceite of cruell disdaine, whiche makes you incapable of reason, and he restored to his libertie, which he can not redeme but by th' assistance of your goodnes.' Wherewith she toke a shorte leave and departed. And beynge arryved at the lodging of her knighte, she founde him all plunged in extreme dollour, upon a felde

bedd, with more argumentes of death then likelihods of lyfe: who, whether he felte some signes of yll lucke by the secrett instigacion of his hart (whyche commonly preferres divers conceites of feare, when the minde is occupyed with dowte) or whether the sorowefull countenance of the messenger dyd signefie her yll successe in hys sute, or what it was, I can not tell, but, as his neyghbour was entringe into the reporte of her aunswere, he stopped her mouthe, and prevented her meanynge with this exclamacion followyng:—'What state is more wretched then he that lyveth dowtefull of him selfe, with dispaire of dispence from disquiett by any assistaunce of tyme or other mediator on his behalf? Who is wrapte in suche miserie, or hath more cause to complaine, then he to whom Fortune hath vowed a contynuance of her malice, without hope to reclaime her favor? Is there any pennance greater then to be punshed with continual passion; or plage of more mortality then to consume by pecemeale in the flame of languishyng dule? Ah! infortunat gentleman! how unhappelye art thou fallen from the felicitie of a lyfe ful of pleasant libertie, with exchaung of thine auncient blysse for a tribute of tormentes more supportable then death! How happie and thrysblissed was thy estate, enjoying the sweete maydenhedd of thy affection and use of fredome, without awe or controlement of any; where now (alas!) the torche of a contrarye experience, yeldes me the effect of a thousande deathes, without lycence notwithstandynge to dye, whereby I woulde dismisse everye plage that staieth the fattall desyer of my dyeng hart. Wherein hathe Fortune this cause of displeasure againste me, yf not that shee is disdainefull of the quiett whyche wee wretches fynde uppon earthe, and suche an ennemye to the common contentement of us all, that only to manifest her power amongeste us, she, uppon a soddaynes, choake our pleasant thurste and desyer of free lyfe wyth pilles of passions, and annoyes of more bitter taste, then any gall tempered with the moste stronge ruberbe that ever came oute of Alaxandria; comittinge us in th'ende to a martirdome of more extremetie, then the pange appointed by deathe to breake in peces the force and strengthe of the

The complaint of Seigneur Philiberto.

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harte? Whereof who is a more familiar experience then the miserable Philiberto; who, in exchaunge of his former quiett and contentement of will, hath coughte, alas! a captivitie more cruell then he that is condemned to ende his dayes in the bottom of a dongeon. Ah! madame, how your countenance argueth the small regarde whyche Zylia hathe of my paine! Full well do I see, alas! that she neyther maks accompte of my letters, nor useth pitie to my distresse, and muche lesse gives any creditt at all to your honest frendeshipp, whyche I confesse I have greatelye abused in procuring you displeasure for the ease of my disquiett. Lett love beare the blame, and I the juste pennance of myne owne indiscrecion, that so rashely have entred the sea of my owne sorowe, and sawe, at setting from the shoare, sufficyent argumentes of mortall evills threatenynge my present peril. Wherein, albeit, I was flattered at the first with a calme and pleasant ebb, whiche made me hoyse saile and floate without anye feare; yet, in the veraye inconstancy which all men attributes to that element, and unruly waves raging without measure in the heighte of that trobled sea, appered plainelie enoughe the likelehodes of my present daunger: whiche I woulde hadde power to destroye me, by some soddaine shypwrake, or caste me spedelye into the bottomles golphe, to be devowred in the throate of some monster in the merciles occean. Ah Love! with what justice cold I exclaime againste thy infydelitie; for that thou hast alwaies flattered me with an assurance of that whyche now I fynde furthest from me! Haste thou a pollecie to perswade a creadit in that wherein thou meanest absolute deceite and then to triumphe in the thraldome of suche as beleve thy charmes? Yf this bee thy order of dealinge, why bearest thou the title of a necessarye vertue, or ympartest thyne authoritie with the powers above? For my parte, yf there were cause of hope, or exspectacion of deliverie, I colde in some sorte qualefye the rage of my present annoye with imaginacion of future redresse, or yf the contynuance of my greeffe argued a lykelehodd of contentement hereafter, the remembraunce of my felycitie to come, wolde mortefye the panges whych nowe I am forced

Love not leviable to any order.

to feele with releace of paine. But alas! too what ende doo I ymagyne a composicion with hym that is not levyable to any order, and muche lesse partaker of the nobled vertue or gifte of piti? Why do I pleade for grace in a courte of comon crueltie, wher tyrrany shootes the gates of compassion againste complaintes of justice? Or to what ende sholde I expect so much as a simple offer of help in him who is borne the common enemie and destruction of many? Is there exspectacion of remedie in him, whose breath is a poison more infective then any venym that earste hath bene made by the moest conning enchauntor that ever was bred in the myerye vale? Or is there reason to depende uppon the delyvery of hym, who lyeth in ambushe to assalte me in worse sorte, then yet I have felte? Ah cruell mistrys! full evill do you measure the circunstance and effect of my goodwill, with protestacion of vowe never to departe out of the lease of your commandementes. Sewer, yf your waspish mynd wolde confirme and make good the consente of your beautie, or that your inwarde partes wolde give leave to th'outewarde argumentes, to worke an effect of that which they promysse by showe, I sholde not have cause to lamente suche lacke in you, and muche lesse indure thys extremetye by hopynge for that whyche I knowe I shall never have. Oh! coulde recompence and unthankefull retourne of the loyal zeale I have borne wythout spotte of dishonest intente in any sortt! Ah! serpent and masqued basylyke, in whome is rather a fayned showe then true effect of any curtesye, the only glaunces of thyne eyes have had power to fill every corner of my hart full of poysoned infection! Wherein, at leaste, if I hadd th'assistance of any arte or droague to remove thy forces, I should bee restored to myne auncient quiet, and thow live at rest, without the noyse of so manye ymportunities. And nowe do I see an experience of auncient opynion touchinge the maladie of love, who is neyther healed by salve nor cured by arte. For to make incision to the sore, wolde give but increase to my paine; and to use th'applicacion of medicins wer but to feede the tyme with incertenties; and to staye the humor were enoughe to give ende to my lyfe by present suffocacion;

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so that, alas! I see no choice of remedie then to bee touched wyth the hande that first gave vent and set abroache the cause of the wound; that I wishe (in ful satisfaction of al my torment) that she might see the verye depth and furthest part of my hart, to th'ende shee might bee judge of my loyaltye, and acknowledge the wronge she doth to the vertu of my honest meaninge. But alas! I fynde herein that my destynies contend agaynst my desyer, and the viewe of her former crueltie makes me dispair of other favor then suche as hitherunto I have founde; so that, as I whollie depende uppon her goodnes, and my lyfe paiseth only in the ballance of her good will, so I know she is fully desolved in a contrarye disposicion agaynst me, makinge a jest of my humble sute and offer of service, takes pleasure in my martirdom and reapose a speciall felycitie in the pointes of my peculiar and mortall greefe.' Whych he ended, not without suche abundance of teares, and supply of other sorowe, that the messenger was forced to abandon the place, and leave him in the middest of his passion, ymparting, notwithstanding, the pointes of her aunswere to a deare frende of the knighte, wyth advise to supplante his affection, or els seke his remedie by some other meanes. Wherin, albeit he performed th'indevor of a frende everye waye, yet the successe argued a small vertue in his diligence, and the patient rather resolved in extremeties then hable to admit any thinge whiche ymported a moderacion to his greefe; the whych greew ymediatlie to suche extreme tearmes, that the strength and desyer of the stomake was converted ymediatlie into a contempt of necessarie sustentacion, and, in place of sleepe, he embraced the offer of vaine conceites appearinge (as it were) by visyon, thorowe the mistery of hollowe dreames; refusinge conference with all men, if not that sometyme he wolde complaine upon the crueltie of one whom he wold not name, wyth desyer to end his life in the pursewte of that quarel. The phizicions were founde at the end of their wittes, both unhable to discerne the cause of his disease, and wythout skil to give a remedie to his evil, what inspection soever they made in his uryne, or tryeng of his pulses, or other signes to judge his greeffe, or any authorytye of their

arte. Whereupon, the gentleman, his companion, entred into such tearmes of sorowe for the sicknes of his frende, that his dollor seamed of equall qualytie to the passion of his companion; not ceassing, notwithstandyng, to solicite the goodwil of Zilya by his owne travell and letters, whych put her in remembrance of the pytie that women oughte to use to th'afflicted, presentes and promises of no smal price, wyth other devises, wherin he judged any vertue to move her haggarde disposicion. And for that he sawe that in the very view of her presence consisted the recovery of his frende, he forgat not to entreat her with tearmes due as he had sewed to the greatest princesse of Spayne or Italye. Wherein, notwythstandynge, he gayned as muche as if he had undertaken to nomber the starres, or stay the course of the sonne; for that she excused her selfe uppon her wydowheade, and how evyll it became a gentlewoman of her estate and callynge to commit her honor to dowte, and honest name to question, in visiting the sicknes of one who is neyther parent, nor allye, nor almoste any waye knowen unto her. Whyche, as it dryve hym from further attempte that waye, so, waighinge the distres of his frend, and the vertu which nature hath given to one woman to entreat an other, thought it a pece of pollecie to give a second charge of her who first broached his request to his cruell mistrys, to whom he preferred suche reasons as he accompted of force to perswade her; sometime alledginge the pytie which naturallie is incydente to all women, and when, and uppon whom, it ought to bee exposed; hee preferred also the glory with names of ymmortalytie which diverse of forreine time have won by semblable vertue. Wherewith he won a seconde graunte of her furtherance, so farr furth as at th'instante they wente together to the lodginge of Seigneur Virley; in whom the very view of his aunciente frende and nexte neighbour sturred up a more encrease of sorowe, forcinge hym to a further complainte then affore, with desyer chiefly that he had never made exsperience of her faith, nor the cause to attempte the frendshipp of her, whose crueltie in preservinge her honor is greater then is necessarye, and compassion lesse then is convenient for his distresse, proceding only of an honest

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zeale, without intent of violacion of honor or honeste name. Which, wyth diverse argumentts of ghastelye regarde accompanienge his last wordes, wrought such effectes of pytie and remorse in the honest matrone his neighbour, that, to prevent his further daunger, shee gave hym assurance of her uttermost, in boarding eftsones the goodwil of his coye mistrys; with protestacion of waranty, that if he wer delivered of his sicknes, she wolde procure a mutual conference betwen him and the cause of his unjust torment. Wherunto, albeit he gave litle credit—for that he thought it was but a broth brued of artifyciall liccour, to feed hym with dropps of uncertaine consolacion—yet, in the very offer of her frendship appered a hope of spedie delivery, which she promised eftsones in sort as you have hard; willinge him to reapose him selfe whollie in the vertue of her indevor and worde. Which seamed to breath an ayre of such compfort and force thorow all his partes, that, defyenge the malice of his late sicknes, hee seamed even then to lacke no part of his former health; neyther had he nede of restoretives or force of confections, to confirme his recoverye, or assistance of staffe or crooche to support his feble lymmes, weakned with so longe sicknes; but, perswadinge a wounderfull felicyty in the very remembrance whiche his mistrys seamed to have of his distresse, he ymagyned to syt alredie in the paradise of his pleasure, dismissinge ymediatly the messenger, who, carefull for her part to put her promisse in use, attended th' offer of convenient time to worke th' effect accordingly. Wherin she was assisted with a speciall favor of fortune, who, for the more expedicion of the matter, brought Zylya and the lady messenger to mete within iij dayes after in one pew, or cloase deske, in the church; wher the solicitor of Seigneur Virley, forcing certeine teares in her eyes, began to practise for her clyent in such sorte that, what with repeticion of the passion of the knighte, speciall reproche againste the crueltie of women in those cases, with generall comendacion to the vertue of such as declare compassion upon the distress of th' afflicted, she wrought her to a remorse of his paine, with consent to prevente his further perill wyth a simple offer of the viewe of her presence, and that under tearmes of con-

dicion, that frome and after the tyme of such frendshipp, he shold disclayme all ymportunities in the pursute of further favor. Wherewyth she enjoyned hym only a libertie of an hower's conference the next day at ij of the clocke in th'afternone: 'where' (saith shee) 'I have more regarde to th'extremetie of his distresse, wyth desyer to stop the course of further daunger in him, then to give hym any cause at al to make his proffit of this frendeshippe, or perswade a hope of further favor in me hereafter; prayinge you, for your part, to give hym in straite charge, neyther to breake the momente of appointmente, nor excede the lymyt of his tyme. Wherein as I reappose a chiefe credite in youre honestie; so, if the successe aunswere not my exspectacion, assure your selfe youre vertue cann not escape wyth oute slaunder, and the best parte of youre faythe remeyne in question for ever.' Wherewyth they departed, the one to her lodging, converted wholly into devise wyth what tearmes she sholde aunswere the day followinge the follie of her folishe lover, the other repaireth to her passioned Vyrle; who, dispairinge still of the goodnes of Zylia, prevented the reaporte of the messenger by askinge her what newes, and whether his mistrys were still shodd with her mettall of aunciente tyrrany or no. 'That you shall try your selfe' (saith she) 'if you have the hart to meete her tomorowe, in her house, at the seconde hower after dynner, according to her owne appointement.' Whiche brought such newe joye into all his desperat partes, that he feell of embrasing the bringer of those gladesome newes, offringe her the choice of a thousand thankes, with libertie to dispose of him and all that was his at her pleasure; thinking the exposicion of his life to a thousande perils, for her sake, was farr insufficiente to countervaile the greatnes of the pleasure shee had procured him in that simple appointmente; whiche he promised to performe the next daye, accordinge to the hower, with intente to endure what soever it pleased Fortune to bestowe uppon hym. 'Agaynst whom to stryve' (sayth he) 'albeit is as though a man sholde make warr agaynst hym selfe, whereof the victorie can not bee without doble daunger; yet am I determined to embrase her doome, although the same

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contend agaynst my felicitie.' In whiche, or such like termes, hee passed the daye, whyche seamed to excede the space and compasse of a yeare to hym that lyveth in exspectacion of frendshipp at the handes of his mistrys; wyth whose snares he was taken, without that he had libertie to give judgement of the malice of a woman, when she is disposed to spyt oute the uttermoste stynge of her venym. And, sewerly, that man is farr from the guide of discrecion, that is touched with the furye of such charmes, seing the daunger of so many thousandes tastinge of the like abuses ought to warne us to eschewe such evils in oure selves. Neytheer have they don such wronge to themselves as generall discredit to the whole masculyne sect; for that, without wisdome, they have become subjecte to theim who have their beyng in this worlde for no other respect then to depende uppon the will and comandement of the man. But as this mortall enchauntement, procedyng of the beautie of women, bothe pleasant and hurtefull to men, seames to bee typped with a certeine vertue of delite, drawing the fondlinges of the worlde to bee in love with the cause of their owne distruction; so I am of oppinon, also, that yt is a kinde of punishement, whiche God hath appointed to plage and torment us for our offences that waye, seynge that the most of us (now a dayes) syppynge of the cupp of that infection, do convert the remembrance and care whiche wee oughte to have of th'estimacion of vertue, into a speciall affection towardes oure fonde fancies; sekinge our felicitie and quiet in the tombe wherein is shrowded the topp and roote of all our myshaps. Besides vertuouse and chaste ladyes are not so simple, nor voide of discrecion, but they beholde affarr of, and are pryvye to the meanyng of, thies franke offers of service and loyaltie, sett fynelie with diverse coollours of fayned vertue; not doutynge, also, that suche masqued lovers differ nothynge from the venemous skorpion, whose poyson lyeth altogether in her taile; for that the ende of such love argues a subvercion of the renowme and former vertues of a man. Whych falleth out rightelie in the sequeile of this Virley; who, thinking to have made a greate conquest in the victorie of free conference with his unkynde mistrys, is nowe

Women are borne to bee obedient to men.

Fleshelie lovers compared to the scorpion.

uppon the waye to her pallais (or rather pathe of hys owne misfortune) with more contentement, I am sewer, then hertofore he hathe received disquiet by his former torment. And, beinge now in the base courte of her lodgyng, he founde her in a lowe hal, attended uppon with one gentlewoman only, where, after certeine cold gretinges, entermedled with a countenance of counterfaite joye on her parte, she slented at his sicknes with thies tearmes:—'Yf everye evill were as mortall indeede, as yt is made by reapport, a sleighte salve colde not so soone cure so greate disease, nor improved medecins worke suche mervelous operacions in so shorte a tyme, specially uppon so daungerous a greeff as yours (Seigneur Virley) seamed to bee, by the reaport of al men unto me. Whiche shall serve me as an undouted experience, hereafter, that the passions of men bee of no longer aboade then the subject of their affection appeares before their eyes. Neyther bee they other thinges then certeine mirroiers, or lookinge glasses, wherein albeyt are represented the veray licknes, or fygure, of theime that beholde theime; yet takynge awaye the object or cause, and the forme vanisheth also, as the poff of winde passinge along the straite of a plaine or deepe valleye.' 'Ah! madame' (saith he) 'how easye yt is to devise of my disease, and harde for me to hope for remedye at youre hande that doutes of the greatnes of my passion! And easlye may he prefer either mirth or sorowe at hys pleasure, whose mind is free from conceits of dout or dispayre; where the harte truelye passioned dreades to make declaracion of eyther of theim, least, in excedyng in the one, or seaminge to muche a nigard of the other, the showe of eyther of theim bringe his sute, or honest intente, in jelewse suspicion with theym in whom onely resteth the *cataplama* of his sore: so that I accompte hym now the most infortunat man, whose state is unhapelye broughte under the awe of suche two mortal extremeties. And, for my parte, yf I were as free from th' extreame pointes of affection as you seame farre from reason to doute of the greatnes of my greeff, I coulde (with better will) allowe youre discreditt in the faythe and inconstancie of menne: but, alas! hee that is caughte with the snares of

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true love, canne beholde no other figure, nor make other liknes, thenne of the true cause of hys affection, the picture whereof remeyneth for ever within the sewrest part of the hart; whiche indeede (as you saye) is the true mirroer, wherein appereth not a fayned shadowe, fadyng with the forme, but a contynuall viewe and remembrance of her by whome wee lyve in such heavenly contemplacion. In whych dyol, or lokyng glasse, I have ymprynted the true effect of the thing, which, by vertue of due meritt, ought to restore strength to my present weaknes; dealing so extreamelie with me from the first tyme of this contemplacion, that th' only offer of hope to restore in th' ende my dekayed partes hathe hetherunto prevented th' effect of utter destruction to every pece and member of my bodie. And touching th' argumentes of healthe whiche you note in me, I am to yeld you alone all homage and honour for the same, for that the favor whiche I fynde in thys present appointement and conference with you, hathe sturred upp thys glee of good lykynge thorow all my partes, with more contentement of the happy encounter then my former greeves gave me cause of extreme dystresse. And yet my martirdome hath neyther bene so small or secrett but the whole worlde hathe witnessed my panges; and you also myghte have beleved theyme, yf eyther the sorowe of my selfe, or reapport of such as tooke pitie of me, had bene of creditt with you. Whereof, also, I am yet to endure a more harde share (yf yt maye bee ymagyned by any braine) so that the same were hable to force a remorse in you on my behalfe. For the greatest felicity I have in this worlde, is to have the favor of any commaundement at youre hande (what perill so ever yt ymportte), to th' ende my diligence and readie indevor to do you service therein, or other your affaires what so ever, maye justefye the vowe of my unfained harte towardes you. Like as, also, I perswade my selfe to bee reysed from a hundreth thousande deathes together, when I ymagyn but a simple compassion in you touchyng the torment I suffer for your beautie. Wherein, yf ever I hadde reason to take pleasure, by a delite whyche nature hathe wroughte in the thynge, I am sewer alredie to have hadd my parte of a thousande

annoies, by the regards of crueltie I have found in you. DISCOURSE
Cancel, at last, good ladie, the comission of former torments, XI
and ceasse hensfurth to plage him that is readye in the place to comitt hys bodye to any sacrafyce for the ransome of your favour. What moveth you, alas! to a discreditt or doute of my payne, wyth opynion that my passion is dyssembled? Lett the sondrye sortes of teares, heretofore distilled on the behalfe of youre discurtesye, so many dayes broughte to ende with continuall sorowe, and nyghtes drawen out at lengthe with drayninge sighes, ye! the present viewe of my pale and ghastelye ghost, perswade you of the contrarye, with assurance of my undowted loyaltie for ever.' Wherewith he behelde her, not without a vente of soddayne teares trycklynge alonge hys cheekes, and shee, for her parte, regarded the earthe wyth a face full of dysdaine as yt seamed; whyche, notwithstandynge, he construed to a proffitt of hys sute, pursewynge the same eftesones in this sorte:—'Ah! madame, have you the hart to deface the glorie of that devyne beautie of yours, wyth an acte of more tyrrannie then ever hath bene noted in anye woman of former tyme? Or accompte you yt a vertue to kyll hym who dyethe everye hower in the veray viewe and remembrance of the heavenlye perfection, wherein you only excell al that ever have bene called faire? If you have resolved my ruyne, why stay you to do execution? Abridge, godd ladye, my lingringe torment with a presente dispatche and ende of lyfe. Deferr no longer the fatall ministers of your wyl, seynge you are aggreed to performe the effect; and suffer at laste my waterye eyes to stop the streames of their auncient sorowe, deryved of the onelye viewe and remembrance of the mistrys of their contemplacions. Whereby my harte shall also supp the laste syropp of desperate hope, and my affections vanyshe with the dekaye of my bodye; who is heare, readie to become your fattall harbenger in the other worlde, with hope to reape there the hyer of my present merytt.'

The ladye, whether her anger woulde gyve no longer place to hys complaint, or that she dowted a force or charme in the same to overthrowe the fortresse of her chastetie,

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Zylya reprehendeth her woer.

gave him the looke of a waspishe mynd, reprehending his rashnes with theis or suche like tearmes of reproche:— 'Yf my pacience woulde yet give leave to your fonde discourse, I see no wante of desyer in you to attempte me with requestes; which neither is your parte to preferr to one of my condicion and callynge, nor yet my honor can brooke to heare of the mouthe of suche as seeke but to seduce the honestie of chaste ladies. Wherein, as you have exacted upon the frendshipp and facilitye in me to here the uttermost of your sute, presumyng (belike) of my consent to departe wyth that whiche you can not restore me againe; so, besides that the present experience of your foule intent shall serve me hereafter as a warraunte againste the assaultes of suche offers, eyther in your selfe or any other equal to you in disposicion, I can give no other aunswere to the tearmes of your requeste, nor favor to your fowle attempte, but that from the instant you ceasse to solicite me, eyther by your selfe or any embassador on your behalfe; protestynge unto you (for my parte) neyther to be seene in the streete nor other place of publike beinge, so long as you are in the countreye, and muche lesse suffer th'accesse of anye gentleman within my house, onles he bee my neare parent or allye. By whiche meanes your importunities onely shall punishe me wyth a soroweful restrainte and absence from the societie of my olde companions and frendes.' Whiche laste resolucion seamed suche a mistery to the mynde of th'infortunat Virley, that, for the time, he stoode as enchaunted, or one newlye dropped fourth of the cloudes, till at laste, as one whollie converted into dispaire of further favor at her hande, he craved onelye for consideracion of his paynes paste, and laste farewell of his loyall fayth to her, a kysse, which he sayed sholde satisfye his longynge at full, and discharge her of further pursewete accordynge to her requeste. The malicious ladye, notinge the fonde desyer of the knighte, and wyth what small coste she mighte nowe rydd her of an importunate suter—meanynge, notwythstandyng, to departe with so small a favor but for a price of greate pennance to hym that soughte to buy it—tolde hym that, as well to satisfye his present request as also to make a further prooffe of his faith, she

wolde performe the full of hys laste demaunde, yf he wolde give her assurance, by the fayth of a gentleman, to do one thinge wherein she was to require hym. Whiche the simple Vyrley did not onely promisse by all protestations of religion or othe, but pawned also the majestie of the Highest for performyng every such commandement as it pleased her to enjoyne hym. Wherewith she seamed satisfyed touchyng th' assurance of his consent, and therupon entred into th' effect of her owne promisse, embracinge and kissynge hym as yf it had bene the firste nighte of theyr mariage, requiryng hym in like sorte to become the maister of his worde and advouche the pointes of his late graunte. The pore gentleman, suspectynge no one thoughte of suche tyrannye in his mistrys, and muche lesse that he shoulde buye his kisses at so deare a price, tolde her he attended the only sommonce of her commaundement, to th' ende she mighte witnes his readie indevor to obeye her. She enjoyned hym, that from that hower till iij yeres were expired, he shoulde become muett, without speakynge in any sorte to any creature lyving, how great so ever his occasion appeared in the true observynge. 'Whereof' (saith she) 'shall appeare an experience of your faith whiche also maye force hereafter a further benefit for you; where the contrarie wil not only discover your villannie but be readye to accuse you of perjurie on the behalfe of a gentlewoman.' Me thinkes I see the perplexed countenaunce of the pore knighte, who, hearinge the sentence of his harde pennance, judged as greate injustice in her for taxing him at so cruell a rate as difficultie in him selfe to performe th' effect of so strange a charge. Albeit his hart was so greate, and he so papisticall in performynge his vowe, that he began even then to enter into the pointes of her commaundement, declarynge by signes that she should bee obeyed. Wherewith he gave her an humble reverence and retyred immediatly to hys lodgynge, faygnynge to suche as were aboute hym that the extremetie of a colde rhume, distillynge from the partes of the braine, had taken awaye the use of his tounge. And because his domnes shoulde not bee a greeffe to his frendes, nor they move his disquiett in demaundynge the cause, he determyned

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to bee a straunger to his countrey till the yeares of pennaunce were runne oute. Wherewith, committynge the order of his affayres at Mountcall, or els where in Pyemount, to the creditt of suche as he thoughte meete to supplye the place of suche truste, tooke twoo or thre of his familyar companions to assiste his voyage; whiche he directed rightelye into Fraunce, as a countreye moste meete for hys abode, chiefely for the mortall warres as then betwen Charles the seventh, and the valyaunt Englishe men possessynge his countrey in the year 1451.

And as the kynge was then in campp in Gascoyne, with intent to pursewe the goodnes of his fortune, and delyver his contrey altogether from th'Englishe nacion, he addressed hym selfe and force to the Duchye of Normandye; where this Pyemountaine knight, being in the campp, was knowen by and by to diverse of the chiefftaines aboute the kinge, as well by the notable service they had seene hym do in diverse places, as also greate creditt he hathe had afore wyth th' earle of Pyemount—who after became Duke of Scavoye, where was greate repaire of the nobilitye of Fraunce, for that he maryed Madame Iolante, seconde doughter to Charles the seventh. After they hadde a whyle lamented his lacke of speache (not knowynge for all they coulde doo the cause of suche disease) they presented hym afore the majestye, wyth such commendacyon of hys vertue and valyauntnes in armes as was necessarye for the worthynes of the same: which forced a greate lykynge in the kynge towardes hym. Albeit his outwarde apparaunce argued sufficiently his inwarde dexteritie that waye; whych also he confyrmed, in publicke view, in an assalte whiche the kinge gave to the English men within Roan, the chiefe and only boolwarke of the whole

1451. country of Normandy; where Signeur Philibarto gave suche effectes of his forwardnes, that he was the first that was seene upon the walles making way to the souldiours to enter the breache and towne. Wherein, not longe affore, the

1430. Duke of Sommerset had burned the counterfait prophet of Fraunce, called La Pucelle Jeane; whome some pratinge Frenchmen do affirme to have wrought merveils in armes during those warrs; but chiefly, that under the conduite of

her, our countryemen lost Orleance, with diverse other holdes in those partes. And for a memory of that forged ydoll, they kepe yet, amongest other relikes, in the abbay of S. Denys—whych I sawe in May last—a greate roostie sworde; wherwith they are not ashamed to advowche that shee performed diverse expedicions and victories againste th' Inglishe nacion. Whych seames as true as that which they are ashamed to put in a chronicle of credit touching their Saint Denys; whom they affirme was executed at Parys, and came from thence, with his heade in his hande, which he buyried in the abbaye. Albeit they saye he rested foure tymes by the way, where they have founded iiij crosses, with the headles ymage of Saint Denys holding a stonye skalpe in his hande. But to oure dom Philiberto, whose forwardnes and fortune in the laste assalte, being wel noted of the kinge, began to kindle a credit in the mynde of the majestie towards hym, in such sorte as, besydes speciall praises given to his worthynes in the hearing of all his capteines, he presented hym wyth the state of a gentleman of his chamber, with pension sufficient to menteyne the port of that place, promissinge besydes an encrease of his bowntye, as he saw a contynuance of hys good service. For the whyche the mute knighte gave the kynge humble thankes by signes, lyfting his handes towards heaven as a witnes of the faithe he promised to kepe without spot to hys prince. Wherof he gave good declaracion not long after in a skirmishe, procured by the Frenche agaynst the Englishe soldiours, under the guide of the onlye flower of chyvalrye of that tyme and valyant capteine, the Lorde Talbot; whose vertue made hym so famous in those warrs that the verye remembrance of hys name procureth a terror to the stowtest Frencheman that thys daye lyveth ther. In this skirmish (if a man may credit a French bragge) the Pyemontoyse and Talbot met and unhorssed eche other. Wherupon the kynge, in consideracion of hys present service and encrease of further corage, to contynue his souldiour made hym capteine of diverse holdes, with charge of fyftie men at armes, wyth promisse (in the worde of a prince) that hereafter he shold find, in more ample maner, in what sorte

Written in their boke of martirs, called *le Catalogue des Martirs.*

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princes oughte to consider the service of suche whose vertue broughte soccours to the necessitie of hym and his people. Wherein truely a prince hath greate reason, not only to bestowe rewardes upon such as deserve well, but embrase that whych carieth a licknes of hys owne nobylitie; seinge that vertue, in what place soever shee take roote, can not but bring furthe good frutes; the use and effect wherof ought to appeare upon such as approche or resemble the place where the first seedes were sowen. Neyther doth any degree of men (according to th' opinion of Plyny) deserve so well of hys prince as the souldiour. 'In whose woundes' (sayth he) 'are inclosed the savetie of the whole countrey, and quiet of the seat royal.' Neyther doth he shrinke to adventure hys bodye agaynst th' ennemye, to establish the reapose of his neyghbour at hoame, who, to requite his many daungers in the felde, or releve hys maymed lymmes, consumed with the warrs, comittes hym at hys retorne to the rigour of justice, and that, most commonly, wythout cause of just offence. Wherof I thinke no one contry of christendom is hable to furnish so many examples of that miserie as the state of Englande; where as (God be praysed!) hath benn no greate occasion of warr since the happie raigne of oure moste blessed Quene that nowe governeth; so (the Lorde and her majestie amend it!) it is a pitye to see how slenderly soldiours be provided for, and how tyranouslye they are persecuted by the malice of caterpillors in cyties, and franklinges in the countrye. Wherof I wishe some suche as I coulde name to mooster in the mowthe of a trenche, or stande in the face of a breache, to th' ende they might both witnes the daunger, and be partakers of the perill of warr: which I doubt not wolde force in the moste of theim a compassion touching the souldiour; whom, also, they wolde defende from beinge devowred of the gallowes by their malice. Thus muche on the behalfe of souldiours; towardes whom I wishe as indiffrent a care in tyme of peace as they are readie and most sewer to abide al daunger when it pleaseth the prince and realme to call theym to service. And now to our dome knighte, who, embrased of the kyng, wyth honor of all his capteines, was

assisted with a seconde meane of further credit with hys prince. For that, ymedyatlie after the heate of the warrs in Fraunce, and the countrey resolved to a quiet staie, it pleased the kinge, for the solace of hym selfe and generall contentmente of hys capteynes, to call a torney royall on horsebacke; where Seigneur Virley, enjoyeng the benefyt of his former fortune, wan only the glorye of the tryumphe. Which gave such encrease to the good opinion of the king, that he entred into councell to cure his dome disease, grevinge, not a litle, that so valyant a gentleman colde not declare his devise; whych seamed to argue no lesse wisedom for the direction of a common welthe or contrey then the force and agilitye of his body had sufficientlie approved his vertue in diverse exploites during that warr. Wherfore he dispatched generall letters thorowout his owne realme, with speciall requestes to the countreys adjoyninge hys kingdome, that who colde give remedye to his evill, and convert his present scilence into a liberty of free speche, should have ten thowsande frankes for rewarde. Then mighte a man see suche a mooster of phizisions and chirurgions, with their appoticaries carienge their bagges and boxes of all confections, that their rowte seamed rather a newe supplie of power, to assiste the kinge against his ennemies, then a convocation of gownesmen to consulte of the disease: who began also to make such war with the ten thousande frankes, skirmishinge one with an other, not so much for the glorye of the acte as gaine of the moneye (without anye helpe notwithstandinge to the sickman) that the kinge was dryven to adde to his golden offer an expresse condicion, that who soever undertoke the cure, wythoute performynge the effecte within a certeine time, shoulde make good the saied sume to the commodytie of the kinge, or, for wante of paymente, to leave his head in pawne. Whiche proclaimed ymediatlye a generall retire to Monseur le Medecyn wyth the rest of his mistical crwe; and, wypinge his nose with the insyde of his sleve, detested with ympietie both Galleine, Hypocrates, and Aviecenes, with other patrons and auncient fathers of phisicke, that wolde not leave theim a sufficient net to fysh so great an honor and riches as ten thousande frankes.

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The brute was no soner made, then th' officers of same undertooke to disperse it into every corner of the countreye, with participacion of the royall edicte and liberalitie of the king to every province, as well on this syde as beyonde the mountes. Wheruppon, Montcall became pertaker of the newes, and Zylya (the first and onlye cause of al) was pryvye (by this meanes) to the place of aboade of her penytenciall lover, and also perswaded of his loyaltie in keping his promise, unworthy any way of such firme regard; seinge that, wher fraude and force do occupie the hart, the religion of promises, yea! the very bond of faith already given, do loase their force; neyther is a man bounde to performe that wherin is constraint of bond. The covetous widow, assuring her self of no lesse authoritie over Seigneur Virley then when he made court to her at Montcal, determyned to go visitt him at Parys, not so much of intent to undo the charme of his dome disease, as desierous of the ten thousand frankes; whereof she made as sure accompte as if they were alreadye under the sewereste locke in her closset at Montcall; perswading her selfe also that the gentleman (being absolved of his promiss by her) would gladly consent, and that she only should have the rewarde and fame of the thinge wherin all others were hable to worke no effect.

Here you see a woman, whom neyther the vertue of honest and true love, nor intent of unfained and loyall service, colde earste move to compassion (and muche lesse aggree to give ease to the sinister affliction of her servant) wrested to a remorse, and overcome with a desyer of fylthie gaine to enlarge her richesse. Oh execrable thurste and desyer of money! Untyll when endureth thy authoritye over the worlde; or howe longe wilte thou blynde the myndes of men with a foggie myste of fylthie lucre? Ah! insatiable and perillous golphe! howe manye haste thou devoured and drowned in thy bottomles throate, whose glorye had pearsed the heighte of the cloudes, and vertue shyned more cleare then the brightnes of the son, yf the darke vaile or shadowe of thy contagiouse infection had not eclipsed their renowme that waye! The frutes, alas! whiche thou bringest furth

(what sugred showe so ever they gyve outwardely) yeldes, indeede, neyther honest fame, nor true felicitye to such as reape theim; seinge that, that dropseye and infectyng humour whiche overronneth all their partes, makes them more desierous of the thing then hable to bee satisfyed: whereby groweth a double discommoditie to the evill of that whiche is th'only fountayne of all mischiefe; neyther is any state more miserable then to have desyer to have muche, and, gettinge al, can not bee satisfyed wyth any thinge, and in the ende overthrowen in their covetous travell by infamouus deathe. Whereof I am content to omitt the familiar prooffes of our tyme, and present you wyth the authoritye of the riche Crassus in Rome; to whome was awarded the punishment of God, by fallynge into the handes of the Parthens, for violacion and commyttynge sacriledge within the temple in Jerusalem. Sexti Mulcus, fryinge in like sorte in the flame of money, and whollie infected wyth the poyson of hym that tormentes the hart of the covetous, cutt of the head of hys patrone and only defendor, Caius Gracchus, trybune of the people. Wherin, touching lyke examples in the femenine secte, I will nowe passe over both forrein and familiar recordes, and restore to your memory th'abuse of this Zilya, who, forgetting her former regarde to vertue (the onely ornament of her honestye and reputacion) feared not also the toyle and travell of the waye, nor other inconvenience what so ever, to committ her lyfe to daunger, and honor to the mercy of hym, in whom the remembrance of her former wrong sturred upp a desyer of double revenge uppon the leaste occasion he coulde fynde. Neyther doubted she to hazarde the effect of her buysynes in a straunge region unknowen to al men, savyng to hym for the only honor of whome the misterye was wrought: but, usynge a shorte consideracion for the order of her affaires at Montcall, she strippes the mountes, and, by extreame labor, arryved at laste at Parys, at suche time as every man dispaired most of recoverye of the dome knighte. Albeit, enquiringe for theim that had authoritye to admitte suche as undertoke the cure, she made it be published that God had putt the remedye of his

The desier of unhoneste gaine the fountaine of all evills.

Crassus fell into the handes of his enemyes for robbing the Church of God.

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disease into her hande, and that only she doubted not to performe th'exspectacion of the kinge that waye. The Commissaries layde afore her the edict, with the condicion of death in the ende if the knighte were not made to speake within xv dayes. All whiche she admitted, and pawned her lyfe for the performance of the enterprise, with protestation, eftesones, that God had opened unto her a secrett meanes to restore hym. Whereof the knighte was furthwith advertised, mervelynge, notwithstandynge, what straunge gentlewoman yt was that had undertaken to undoo the charme of his disease, and force hym to breake the vowe of his pennance to his cruell Zylia; in whom (of all other) he accompted not so much frendshipp, as to make so longe a jorney for the ease of the evill whereof she onely was the cause. He was rather of opinion that it was hys neyghbour of Montcall, —she, I meane, that firste solicited Zilya on his behalfe and now had forced her to a compassion of his pennance, wyth commission to absolve hym of the rest of his hard vow. Wherof, as he devised diversly, without stayinge upon any certaintie or trothe, beholde! the deputies presentes Zilya in the chamber of Seigneur Virley; who, seinge an effect of that which earst he was not hable to ymagyne, gave judgemente by and by of the cause of the comminge of hys ennemye; and that the promisse of ten thousande frankes had more power to make her passe the mountes, then the respect of frendship or compassion to his straung distresse, which so long had kept him in the likenes of a dead man. Wherewith, the viewe of her former incyvilitie and rigour, exceding the disposicion of any woman that ever was noted cruel, procured ymedyatlye a conversacion of his auncient love, and regarde to her bewtie, into a mortal hate, wyth desyer of vengance equall to her offence; thinkinge it no grudge in conscience (in accepting the offer of his fortune) to yelde detestable homage, indeede, to the saint that earst accompted al his service but effectes of ydolatry, and to retorne her frendship with a trybute of the same money wyth the whiche she made hym tast the frutes of an inordinate crueltie; aswell for hys owne contentmente in acquitinge so good a torne with semblable payment, as also to leave example to

all coye and disdaynefull dames to shonne the like abuse towardes any honest gentleman; and that, havinge regarde to the merite of the personnes, and specially to the reputacion of themselves, they become not so prodigal as to make a vent at a vile price of their honor, whych they ought to defende, and kepe without spott, agaynst the assaltes of the moste honest and vertuous lover that ever offred to serve under the flagge of any bewtie, how cleare so ever it shoane. And yet howe manye of those do wee see, now a dayes, who wyll not sticke to denye the service of suche as proffer theim love, as well for the respecte of vertue as desyer to embrase a fadinge glee of flickeringe bewtie; and after commit theimselves to open sale to who will bidd most for theim: whyche kinde of Venitian Madonas, as I wishe to be barred the societie of chaste ladyes, and not suffred to sytt amongest the moste errande coortisans that ever were, havinge any sparke of zeale or frendship in their harte; so they had but justice (in myne opynion) if the benefyt or libertie of every common wealthe were taken from theime, to th' ende they might wander as a kinde of marked people of all the worlde. For she that loveth for money, and makes a gaine or certeine revenue of th' use of her bodie, wil seldome make conscience to betraye hym to whom she gives continance of frendship; seinge her love (typped with a disyer of gaine) tendes altogether to endes of evill and actes of tyrannoyse effect. Wherein, as the honest sorte of women are alwayes defended by th' integretye of their conversacion and lyfe, so I crave a patience in the rest, touchinge the punishment I wishe upon theim, and spedie amendment of lif, to th' ende their vertue may make theim as meritorious of reputacion in deede as some of theime are undowtedlye unworthye of the use of lyfe, or benefytte of common ayre. DISCOURSE XI

Seigneur Virley then, havinge Zylya in his presence, and almost at commaundement, fayned not to knowe her, refraininge from all offers of humanitye, eyther salutinge her comminges by signes of thankefull countenance, or other wayes; whych at the first moved no small astonishmente in our wydow, who, notwithstanding, seing she was entred into an enterprise th' effect whereof (she sawe) cold not bee per-

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formed without the losse of honor or life, made of necessitie a vertue, wyth resolucion to committ her to the mercie of her Fortune, and make a laste prooffe of her goodnes, what inconstauncie sooever is gyven unto her of all men. Wherewyth, desyeringe the reste to retire, shee shoot the doare and toke the knighte by the hande; whome shee behelde in the face, and with a smylinge regarde asked hym if he had so sone forgotten hys deare Zylya, or if he had the hart to make so smal accompte of her in that place, yeldinge her not long since such authoritye over hym and al that was his at Montcall? 'Dissemble no more' (sayth she) 'to knowe her who hath stayed for no paines to comme hether to acquite you of your promiss, with requeste to pardon the faulte I have made in abusynge the vertue of th' oneste love you bare me. It is I, who, lamentyng my former crueltye, am here to do pennaunce for the wronge I have don you in restraining the libertie of your tonge, and takynge revenge of my former rigour, am to yelde tribut to your rare loyaltye; with more redines to dismisse the charme that so longe hath kepte your tonge enchanted, then ever I had reason to add so cruell a recompence to your honeste deserte.'

All whiche seamed to move as manye wordes in the dome knighte as there is life or feeling in the senceles rocke standing in the middest of the sea. And seing him make signes that it was not in his power to speake, nor move th' enchauntement of his tounge, she was forced to recharge him with all sortes of kisses, embracing and collyng every part of his face and necke, not without great store of teares, wherwith she bedewed eche parte of his bossom and outeward garmentes, using th' assistance of everye meane wherein she judged vertue to make hym tractable to her request. Whych, notwithstandyng, he retourned wyth a solemne scilence; and forgettyng his auncient ceremonies, and amarous oracions whiche he was wonte to use as perswacions of pitye to his ladye, he alledged nowe a dispense from speakynge by her commandement only, practising altogether (by signes) the use and execution of that whiche earste he had so hoatly pursewed, both by sute and longe service. Wherin as he

seamed somwhat awaked by her, that long had kepte his mynde in a slomber, and drayned his bodye both of desyer and corage, so he soughte in like sorte to sett abroache in her an appetitt of that wherein she hath bene earste no lesse curious then straung. Wherin she, for her part (more to prevent the perill of life, and losse of the peinall condicion, then for any respecte of frendshipp to the knightes) made hym the maister of his requeste, with consent to use her at his pleasure, and franke possession of that which he and all lovers accompte the chiefeste felicitie in love. Wherin they lived with equal contentement until the ende of xv dayes (the tearme appointed to cure the knighte) without that the pore wydowe coulde make conversion of her dome patient into a man using the libertie of his speche; albeit she layed afore him, in how many sortes she greved with her owne follie in binding him to so strange inconvenience, and the pennance she had don losing her honor, to satisfie his pleasure, and absolve him of his vowe. All which seamed as Hebrue songes to Seigneur Virley; who, determinynge to playe double or quitt with her, thoughte it necessarie to add a further feare to her former losse, to th'ende she mighte feele her parte of daunger, aswell as her crueltie had made hym pyne awaye in secret sorowe the better parte of two yeres: which he performed accordingly for the tearme expired; and the knighte, nothing altered from his auncient order of scilent disposicion, the commissioners sommoned the lady wydowe to performe the pointes of th'edict, importing ij choises of perentorie extremitie, either to pay ten thousand frankes (whiche she had not, nor was hable to gett) or make good her promisse with the losse of her lyfe, which she was sewer to performe without a speciall grace of the king and that by th'intercession of her enemye.

Zylya soroweth her former crueltie.

What was now the refuge of this ladie, distressed on every side, if not to retire into teares, dropping with streames of present sorow in the remembrance of her former crueltie. 'Ah! unhappye and thrys-wretched ladye that I am' (saith she) 'broughte to due desolacion and punishment by shame for an effecte of crueltie excedynge the barbarous disposicion of the Turke, or Moare, or other infidell withoute religion or

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faith. In seekinge, alas! to deceive an other I am fallen into the daunger appointed to give ende to my life. Was it not sufficient for me to be warned of the revenge of mine enemye by myne owne rigour used towardes hym, but that I must attempte his curtesie, and willinglie fal into the malice of hym, who, triumphinge in the spoiles of mine honor, gothe about also to take from me my lyfe, and mortifye my renowme for ever? Why fel I not alas! into the jawes of som wilde beaste in passing the Alpes, or threw my selfe hedlonge from the topp of some craggie mountaine, whereby I shold have prevented the stroake of his malice, who seekes to make me a wounder to the multitude for attemptinge a thinge which restes whollie at the wil and pleasure of him whom I had so haynously offended? Ah! Seigneur Virley, how can you bestowe suche colde consideracion on the pleasures wherein I have bene so liberall on youre behalfe? Or what moveth these regardes of disdaine, with desyer to have the lyfe of her, who if ever she offended, hath alredie performed the pennaunce of her falte? And what offence is so greate whiche is not satisfyed with amendes for the trespas? Which if I have not alreadye aunswered, let my teares make good the reste of your rigorous sentence. Imagin, Seigneur Virley, what a vertue it is to forgive; where the extremetye of revenge is the fowlest vice that occupieth the harte of man. And for your parte, as you have made your selfe knowen to the worlde by your continuall felicitie in all your affaires, so sticke not to make an encrease of your glorye by preventynge the perill of her, who lyinge prostrate afore your knees, bathinge the same in sooddes of her sorowfull teares, dothe also kysse your feet in signe of repentance of her former follye. Ah! lett me not dye for my simplicitye, nor min honor put to sacrifise, as a revenge of the litle wronge, whiche, I confesse, my chastetie hath don you! Take not, alas! so cruell vengeance uppon so small an offence; neyther suffer the blodd of my life to quenche the thurst of your malice that have alredie payed treble tribute in respect of my falte.' Wherewith (meanynge yet to continue in tearmes of complaint) the sergeaunt cryminall (wyth authoritie from the kyng) arested her to prison; whether she wente with small

Honestie the chiefest support of lyfe.

constraint as wearye alredye with the viewe of her present misery, and loathynge the use of longer lyfe, havynge loste the chiefe support of the same. But the knighte, pinched with some remorse touchinge the passion of his deare Zilya, thinkynge her sufficiently punished for so small offence, wente immediatly to the kynge, to whome, in the hearing of his lordes, he makes discourse of his love passed, the crueltie of Zilya in bindynge hym to a vowe of scilence for iij yeres, and the present revenge he hath taken of her discurtesye, wyth humble request in the ende to moderat the rigour of his justice, both to her and others that were in prison for his recoverye; 'seing' (saith he) 'the same depended either uppon her that bounde me to that charge, or els uppon th' assistance of time, which at last woulde have dissolved my dome traunce by th' accomplishment of the thinge whiche my fayth bounde me to performe.'

The kynge merveiled not a litle to heare so straunge a historye, rejoysyng nothwithstandynge in the happie retourne of his speche, and giving singler commendacion to the loyaltye of his knighte, condemned presentlye the crueltie and covetousnes of the widowe; uppon whome hadd folowed execution accordinglye, yf it had not beene prevented by the speciall intercession of Seigneur Virley, who, takynge her out of prison, accompanied her certeine dayes journey, aswell to showe her the kynges liberalitye in diverse townes and holdes whiche he had bestowed uppon hym, as also to satisfye his appetitt at the full, with the frutes whereof he had fealte earste so pleasant a taste. Wherewith, also, she dyd not muche mislike, for that the prooff of suche favor, unlooked for, tooke awaye the payne of her late imprisonement justlye deserved: besides her late dispair of life made her doble thankeful to the author of her libertie; which she embrased with more contentement then when she knewe not what it was to loase the pleasant taste of free lyfe. Wherein maye be noted an experience of the dealing of Fortune, who kepes in stoare like punishment for all such as, reaposyng to much for them selves in their owne force, do defye that litle which they accompte to consiste in others; and, in respect of their owne power, do condemne the authoritye which other

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men have. If a vaine glorye, and conceite of a chastetie invincible, had not deceived this ladye, or a desyer of covetous gaine blaired her eyes, it had bene harde to have judged her incontinencie, whiche appeared both in her franke familiaritie towards the passioned knight, and also in gredie desyer to fyll her pursse and carye awaye the praise from all other that undertoke th' enterprise. And yet, as you see, her gaine hath given a dishonest title to her name for ever, with an occasion to th' enemies of women to crie out of the whole secte. But there is no reason that the falte or follye of one shoulde impaire in any sorte the nobilitie of so manye vertues and honest ladyes, whose chastetie, and honest conveigh of life, defendes them againste the crueltie and covetousnes of this Zylia and suche as resemble her in any sorte: who, after certeine dayes of recreation with her lover, retireth into Pyemount, where she drewe furth the remeinder of her yeres in continuall grudge and frett of conscience, with firme perswasion ever after that the force of man is nothinge where God doth not worke by his grace; without whose assistance we can neyther learne that which is good, nor defende ourselves from the daunger of any evil. Like as, also, if we want that guide in our doing, our workes (smellynge of nothinge but the corrupcion of our owne nature) make us seame not muche unlike the loathsom swine, wallowinge in a dortye or moddie poodle, to encrease her fylthynes.

DISCOURSE XII

PERILLO SUFFRETH muche for the love of CARMOSYNA, and marienge her in the ende, were both two striken to deathe with a thonderbolte, the firste nighte of their unfortunat mariage.

DISCOURSE XII

THE ARGUMENT

According to the Lattyne adage, everie vice, how perilous soever it appeare, hath power to work in some degre th' opperacion of a special vertu. For, albeit the sondrie enormities growing daily amongest us by the unbridled humour of oure affection, which we commonly cal love, argue the same to bee a passion of moste daungerous and perverse corrupcion, yet we have experience of wonderfull effectes of vertuous modestie wrought by that common evill; as the whoremonger and adulteror reduced to a repentance and moderacion in his pleasures, the tyran and morderor moved to compassion touching the cause of th' innocent, and the unthrift reclaymed to an honest staie of lif, whiche makes me of opynion that this passion (given us by nature), albeit it be an infection of it selfe, yet it serves also as a contrepoison to drive out another venym, according to the propertie of the scorpion, which of her selfe, and in herself, carieth the stinge of mortal hurte, and oyntment of spedie remedie, th' occasion of present death, and means to preserve life: not meaning for all this to perswade that it is of necessitie we make ourselves subject altogether to this humor of good and evill disposicion, nor allow them that willingly incurr the perill of such fre ymprisonment; but placinge it for this tyme amongest thinges of indifferent tolleracion, because he neither seamed blind nor void of discrecion on the behalf of those whose examples I meane to prefarr in this historie. I maye boldlie advoche that which we call affection to be a passion resembling in som respect the condicion of true amytie, and not muche unlike, for the moste parte, the generall evill whiche the Grecians cal *Philautia*, and we tearme by the title of love, or vaine flatterie of our selves, chiefly when we see any so frendly to his desiers, that, to satisfye the inordinat thruste, or glot of his gredie appetit, he forgettes bothe honor and honestie, with the respect

Vertues in love.

and duetie of his conscience. Besides, what ymages of vertue, curtesie, or bowntiful dispocision soever, our lovers do ymagyn in theim whom they serve, dymming the eyes of the worlde wyth a miste of dissembled substance, as thoughe the cause of their liberall offer of service were derived of an intent of honest frendshippe, yet their travailes that way concludes (we se) with other ende, for that they hunt only the chase of pleasure, procedinge of the viewe of an exterior bewtie. Wherin their meaninge is sufficiently manifeste in the sugred oracions, and discourses of eloquent stile, which those amarus orators seme to prefer, when their mindes (occupied whollie in the contemplacion of their mistresses) do commit the praise of the perfection in their ladies to the filed fordge of their fine tongue. In which, what other thing do they more chiefly commend then a devyn misterie or conninge worke of nature painted with a dy of white or redd in her face, a delicate tongue to dilate of matters of fancie, an entysinge countenance, with a grace and behaviour equal with the majestie of a princes? Al which, as they argewe the vanitie of him that reapose delite in such fondnes, differinge altogether from the true ornamentes of the soule, or pattorne wherby the perfection of vertue is discerned by th' unfayned workes and absolute accion; so, dismissing this fond philosophie, not contending greatly whether Love be a natural corrupcion or a thing perticipating with vertue, we may be bold to advouche his power to prevaile in things which seame of ympossibilitie to th' other passions that be common unto us. For what thinge can be of greater force in a man then that, which, constrainynge an alteracion of custome, and breach of that which by contynuance hath taken rote within us, doth make (as it were) a new body, and the mynd a meare straunger to her former cogitacions? Which I neither inferr without cause, nor menteyne this argument without great reason, for that, as of al the vices which spot the lif of man, ther is none (except the excecrable syn of whoredom) which makes us soner forget God and good order then the detestable exercise of unlawful game: neither are we so hardly reclaymed from any thing as that cutthrote delite; for that it is almost as possible to convert the crueltie of a she wolffe or lyones into a present mekenes, as to mortefie the desier of plaie in him which hath bene norrished and nozelled therin from the beginning of his yeres. Even so notwithstanding, the force of love wrought such a misterie in an unthrift of Naples, that, of the moste prodigall

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and ryotous spendor that hath bene noted in any age, hee made a most staide and sparing gentleman that Italy hath brought furth of many yeres, since or afore his time. Albeit, even upon the point and beginning of his new fondacion, beinge redie with all to expose frutes of his happye chang frome evill to good trade, he was encowntred wyth the malice of his destinies, which abridged hys felicytie and life in one moment: wherof you maye discerne a manifeste profe in the sequeile of the historie folowing.

T happened (not long synce) in the riche and populus citie of Naples, who norrisheth ordinarylie an infinitie of youth of all degrees, that, amongest of the wantons broughte upp there at that tyme, there was one named Anthonio Perillo; who, enjoyenge a libertye more then was necessarye to one of so younge yeres and greene understandyng, made absolute declaracion (affore the race of youthe did stopp in hym) what it is to passe the yeres of correction without the awe of parentes, tutour, or controller. For his father havyng performed his jornaye whiche nature appointed hym in this woorlde, resigned hys bodie to earthe, and his goodes and possessions to his sonne, who, fyndyng so manye golden coffers and chestes full of treasure, to assiste his prodigal and wanton dispocision, forgat not ymediatly to enter into the trade of a licencius life: wherein he founde no staye nor ympedyment to his will, for that the necligence of his father had lefte hym withoute the awe or authoritie of any. And, albeit in the life of his father he was a continuall hawnter of the *Berlea*, or common house of unthriftie exercises, where, for wante of sufficient deniers to furnishe his desier, with skill in casting the three deccitfull companions of blacke and white upon a square table, he was forced often tymes to forbeare to playe, and learne conynge in lokyng uppon; yet tyme, with his owne diligence, made hym so artificiall, that, beyng but a cryer of awme, there

Dicesing house.

were fewe hable to excede his sleyghte in castinge twelve affore sixe of two dyce, or tooke halfe so good accomte or regarde to the course of the cardes. And yet, notwithstanding, he was not so wel grownded in the principles of his arte, but often tymes (his conyng beguilyng hym) he was prevented with a contrarie sleighte, and onelye his purse paide the charge of the whole companye: whiche was not unmarked of some two or three of the famyliars of his father, the respect of whose frendship and vertue, with sondrie argumentes of ymynent destruction to his sonne, moved theym to enter into tearmes of admonicion, layinge affore him the circumstance of his sondrie faltes, but chiefly reprehendinge the greate wronge he did to his owne estimacion; for that the waye to atteyne to renowne of vertue was cleane contrary to the vicious pathe of ydle playe; wherein he walked with more delite then belonged to the sonne of so good a father. They gave him examples of the destruction of manye, and not one that used that ydle exercise dyed eyther with honour, wealthe or estimacion; that it was the shopp and storehowse of all morders, blasphemy, perjurye, thefte, glottonie, whoredome, with an infynitie of other mortall inconveniences; and in th' ende, when plaie hadd lefte his purse without a lynyng, and he not hable any longer to feede the vaine of that humor but by unlawfull meanes, he sholde be payde wyth the hyer of theym, who, without commission, skowringe the plaines, do pray of what the fynde, and after yeldes accompte to the hangman uppon the fatall hill, with a skarffe or collor of corde aboute their necke in token of glorie. They required a regarde to the honor of his auncestors, but chiefly not to discredit the honeste lyfe of his late father. 'For that' (saye they) 'as the uprighte doyng of the child living susteyneth the renowme of the father beyng dead, so there can happen no greater infamie to the son then not to make good the vertue and civill partes of his father.' For ende they advysed hym to dysmisse his prodigall trade of lyfe affore he were utterly bankeroute of patrimonie and possession. But he, not liking to be pinched so neare the quicke, and muche lesse to heare the secrettes of his falte so plainely decipherede, replied

Perillo reprehended of certeine his frendes.

The house of play, a storehouse of all vices.

Tenaunte by the high way side, called theaves in plaine Englyshe.

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accordynge to the discrecion of our wilfull youth now a daies, given whollie to feede uppon th' apetite of their foolyshe fancie, that, touchyng the companies he hawnted, they were no worse then suche as were norished in the houses of princes and familiar compainons to the greatest lordes of the countreye. And for the reste, as he was not to yelde accompte of his lyfe to anye of theym, so he wished theym to bestowe that care uppon their owne children: for hym he was of sufficient yeres to governe hym selfe and give convenient order to suche affaires as belonged to his trade. Wherewith he stopped the further replie of th' oldmen; who, notinge th' arrogante tearmes of this princkocks, commited hym to the meede of his owne follie, judgynge no time convenient to reclayme hym til he had felte the smarte of the whipp famyn and penury, with other pinching extremities attendyng the ende of an unthriftye lyfe.

Love.

But he that seamed invincible againste all good councel was made tractable by hym that plieth the moste stronge and stubborne uppon earthe; and that which men accomptes the only blindnes of the world, unsealed the eyes of this youngling, and so tooke awaye the vaile of his arrogante follie, that, acknowledging everie pointe he had offended, he was not onely privie to his owne falte but also pertaker of the penance. And as one poyson driveth oute an other, and no one vice that is not subjecte to the correction of an other falte, soo, by that invincible ympression whyche the poetes have painted in the shape of a blynde boye, properly called Love, this gamster was not onely forced to a spedye chaunge and alteracion of lyfe, but also, after sondrie and sharpe showers of adversatie, restored to his auncient entyer and place of honour and estimacion. For, at the same instante, within Naples, sojorned a riche merchante, blessed at Goddes handes chiefly with a faire and vertuous doughter, called Carmosyna, whose only beautie made more breaches into the harte of Antonio Perillo then the grave admonicions of th' elders or any other of his frendes. And albeit he was (as it were) soo bewitched and drowned in the devocion of playe that all tymes seamed hatefull whyche broughte hym not fresh supplies of gamsters; yet, havynge once

glaunced uppon the glisteringe eyes of this younge girle, he coulde not so well governe his encounter, that not onely the desier of that ydle exercise was cleane mortefyed in hym, but also he suffred hym selfe imediatly to be enrolled in the booke of loyall lovers, in suche sorte as he never delited so much in any plaie at the dise, as nowe he doateth appon the beautie of Carmosina; who, for her parte, notynge sondrie entisynge glees whyche nature had lente to the younge man, together with his bowntefull dispocition, with brave attyre and courtlyke wearing his apparell—whyche, as it is one chyef allurement that somons the affection of a woman at this day, so the found woman wil rather delite in his smal waste, and exterior proporcion, then ymbrase the vertue and giftes of commendacion in a man—thoughte it an effect of equal courtesie to retorne his affection with semblable love. Wherefore, yf he felte any tormente, her passion was nothynge inferior, whiche also grewe to tearmes of doble greefe on bothe partes, for that they durst neither use the credit of any messenger to discover their darke meanynge, and muche lesse were they assysted with meanes of conference, or accesse together; for that the maides thear are bounde to a more strayte taske of libertie then in our countree: but for th'oppynion of their chastetie I leave it to the judgment of them that have had indifferent experience of bothe the places. But Perillo as moste hottly assailed, and leaste hable to resiste th'alaram, and felynge a taste of that whereof he was ignorante in th'operation, and doubting altogether of th'accident til nature made him understand the mistery, entered into his laborinth of endles annoye, ravynge and raginge with hollowe dreames, with doubte which of his wittes he mighte moste boldly employe in bewraienge his vehemente affection to the newe mistrys of his harte; of whose good will, if he had but a symple assurance by the breath of her owne mouth, he seamed not to doubte any waye the consente of her father, for that th'inequalitie of degree and honor rested on his side; perswadyng withal that the merchant wolde willingly admit th'allyaunce, because the mariage wolde bringe a medley of honor into the base and darke complexion of his howse. But in this

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accompt he forgatt the chiefest charge, and that which at this daye is most respected in makinge of mariages, I meane wealthe and possessions, whereof Perillo had alreadie made marchandise, and exchanged the moste of that whiche was his for a simple remembraunce of vaine delites passed; neyther did he consider the condicion of his presente state, with diminucion of his aunciente fame and honestie by a generall brute of his unthriftie life. All which, notwithstandinge, Love forced hym to trie the forde, and sounde the harte of the faire Carmosyna, assisting him also with a meane to have th' acquaintance of an old matrone, her outwarde governesse and inwarde credit of harte, whom he dandled with suche peppered perswacions, and infections of certeine crownes fallynge willingly into her pockett, that she gave assuraunce of her helpe to th' uttermost, both in folowing and solicityng the matter, yf it were once sett abroch by hym selfe. Whiche he performed by her the next daye in a letter of this or like effecte :—

Riches most respected in mariages now a dayes.

Perillo writeth to Carmosyna.

'God forbidd, that any part of my bodye sholde refuce to condiscende to that whiche my harte hath alredye vowed touchinge my humble service on your behalfe, good madam; whose onely beautie, ceassynge not to mainteine continuall quarel with mine auncient quiet, hath restored me to so general and mortal a passion, that, without the present dewe of pitie distillynge from the spedie consente of your favor, I doubte whether nature is hable any longer to give norriture to the feble partes of my weary corps. And seinge the intente of my affection is not onely voyde of all dissembling and flatteringe abuses in the vertue of true loyaltie, but also ymportes a meaninge and humble request of lawfull mariage, I crave hereby a confirmacion of your good will touchinge the same; to th' ende that, wyth the consente of your favor, I may march with more assurance to demaunde you of your father. I nede not prefer the honor and nobilitie of my house to move you to indifferent consideracion of me, seinge your selfe can decipher sufficiently the particularities of my whole discente; neither put you in remembrance of th' authoritie whiche of longe hathe bene due to mine aunces-

tors in this publike weale, for that you are not ignorante of anye parte of the same. All which, if they lacke force to move you to just compassion, dispose your selfe (good lady) to the viewe of my present martirdom, and measuringe the justice of my merit wyth the greatnes of my greef, to sende the messenger of spedie consolacion to hym, who, pyning in his laborinth of unfayned loyaltie, attendes the happie newes of your consent, and in the meane while doth humblie kisse the hande of the paragon Carmosyna.—Your loyall servante, ANTONIO PERILLO.'

The girle, not earst accustomed to receive such embassages, seamed to prefer some litle astonishment at the first view of the letter; not for that she misliked the contentes, but to prevent cause of suspicion in her whom she neded not have dowted, if she had bene privie to the resolute league betwene her newe servante and old governes; who, also, for her part, forgat not here to applie the *cataplame* of her promise; for, commending the sondrie good partes of the gentleman, perswaded her that it was an effecte of vertue to aide th' affliction of such as suffer distres, and that her honestie cold no way stand in awe of slaunder in requiting a most loyall and unfayned love with reciprocal affection. 'Besides,' saith she, 'in the allyance consistes a decoracion and increase of honor to al your house.' Wherwyth indevoring yet to sporr her, who of her selfe was sufficiently bent to ronne that cariare, wrested at last not only an equall love in the girle, but also a confirmacion of the same by a letter, whych she retorned unto hym under thies tearmes:—

Carmosyna aunswereth the letter of Perillo.

'Aswel by the roundnes of your letter (sir) as relacion of my governes, I understande the franke offer of your unfayned frendshipp. Wherin, as the justice of your meritt moveth me to expose th' uttermost of the consideracion that my power is hable to performe, so I greve that any restrainte shold be an ympediment to the liberal recompense of the large honor you offer me by my parentes; from whom albeit muste procede the chief and principal aunswere to your demaunde—for that the yoke of dutifull obedience kepeth

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the graunt of my good will under the awe of their consentes —yet, seynge the vehemencie of your love (whych hath devyded himselfe into a *simpathia* or equalitie of affection in us both) and reaposing muche for my selfe in th' integretie of your meaninge, I wishe my father wold rather admit your present request then delibrate upon the choise of other husband for me. Wherfore my advise is you give a charge of his good will, wyth suche tearmes as you accompte most convenient to fede the humor of angry old men: th' expedicion wherof I commit to the vehemente suggestion of your inward desier, whiche (without the consente of my parentes) I can not satisfye otherwayes then wyth a simple zeale; wherof I send you herewith th' articles of assurance, sealed wyth th' unfayned faith of youre most deare and loyall CARMOSYNA.'

The operacion of this aunswer seamed of suche force in the harte of Antonio that he ymagined he embrased at th' instante the faire Carmosina, perswading alredie a resolute consomacion of the bargaine by old Minio her father; to whom, with more hast then good spede, he declareth the next morninge the honor and honest love he bare to his doughter, with desier that he wold admit him for his son in lawe. Wherein his expectacion was not onely frustrat, for that the replye of the marchante seamed to excede the compasse of his conceite, but also ymported tearmes of reaproch; and, reprehending his disordred youthe, advised him that affore he went about to marie, to learne some trade to redeme his possession, or elles procure such competente porcion, as mighte both susteyne hym selfe and familie, and also prevente the miseries of olde age, yf God blessed hym with so longe a tyme in this world. 'For' (saith he) 'I will not commit my doughter to any but such as, havyng sufficient to menteine her estate, is also carefull too encrease that whyche God and fortune have ymparted unto theim; neither shall the respect of your pleasure move me to condiscende to the misery of her whome you saye you love; for I wishe rather to see the juste destruction of th' one, then th' indifferent desolacion

Mynio deniethe to mary his doughter to Perillo.

of you bothe; merveilinge also that love hath sturred up this requeste in you, seinge that, yf you honored Carmosina in suche sorte as you saye, you wolde also be carefull of her advancement; but as I see and knowe well enoughe that the wanton instigacion of a folishe appetit so moveth you to make a demaunde of that which shame and raison forbidde you, not onely to pursewe, but also perswades you to exclude utterlie oute of your remembraunce, so lett thyes fewe wordes suffice for a resolute aunswere, that the viewe of your unthriftie life hetherunto, with the nedefull condicion of your presente estate, makes you unworthie and unhable to enjoye her, whom otherwayes you sholde have founde me no lesse willing to have joyned in consente then you desierous to demaunde her in sorte of honest mariage.'

Thies laste wordes and aunswere not loked for of th' olde marchant broughte no small perplexitie to our pore Perillo, who, by the vehemencye of his passion, was forced to abandon the place, and retire to his lodginge, where, with tunes of greate dollour, he entered into a survoye or viewe of his former lyfe, in this sorte:—'Ys it possible' (saith he) 'that povertie shall brynge me in contempte, and kepe from me the use of the thinge whereof I made so sewer accompte? Or is the remembrance of the ydle exercises of my wanton youth past the onelye ympediment to this newe alliance with Minio? What reason hath he to denie me the title of his son in lawe, and muche lesse to heare me skarce speake in the demaunde of his daughter, if not that he seeth so general a dyminucion of the porcion and possession that wer lefte me, by my inordinat and prodigal trade of lyfe; fearing also that play (consumyng me by peecemeale) will leave me in the ende neyther revenue nor renowme, nor skarcelye a simple remembrance of the house whereof I tooke my begynnynge? I woulde myne eyes had beene seeled, and handes tormented with the quyveryng palsey, when firste I learned the subtilties and sleightes of cardes and dise. I wishe I had bene bound to a taske of painefull toile without releace from travell when firste I gave comission to that idle trade, to supplante all desier and necessary care in preservinge the entire of my fathers remaine. Howe unhappie was I, alas! to kicke at

The complaint of Perillo.

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the councell of such as, reprehendyng my follies, preferred an affectioned care of my commoditie! Why was I so unthankefull to their zeale, and unwillinge to follow their advise? Yf I had put a brydel to my pleasure, I had eschewed this hard penance of my unthriftie youthe, which nowe I fynde (alas! to late) to stande moste nede of the admonicions of ryper age. Ah! I wolde I had sooner sipped of the cup of love; to the ende that, being broughte to the knowledge of that whereof I fynde to late an experience, I myghte have preserved the greatest parte of that which I have alredie loste. But what! shall my desaster passed take awaie the hope of a future fortune, or mortefie all expectacion of th'assistance of a better tyme? Or is it a vertue to dispaire in distresse? No! lett rather the view of my disorder passed put me in remembrance to retire to a newe governement and trade of lyfe; in suche sorte as, with an honeste indevour to make store of that whiche is lefte, and reclaime the reste that is gone, I maye give absolute argument to the worlde of a chaunge and amendment of lyfe: which, also, may convert the hardnes of the harte of Minyo into a disposicion and desyer to confirme the honest league which I crave at his handes.' Where upon, he put suche expedicion to his newe devise, that, in one instante, renouncynge every pointe and circumstance of his former life, he was transformed from the forme and inclinacion of a seconde Acolastus into the shapp of a sparinge marchante. Wherewith, takynge th'advise of some of his frendes, who also assisted his honeste indevor with some porcion of money, he converted the smal remeinder of his inheritaunce into some three or foure thousande crownes, with an intente to beare an adventure with certeine marchantes that were upon the pointe to furnish a voyage from Levant to Alexandria, a citie in Egypte, builded by the greate Alexander, being at this daye th'only trade of the easte partes for all sortes of spices and other marchandise of greate value; and from whence (for the moste parte) the Venetians, Genoeys, Florentins, and other countreyes of Italye, keping their banke and storehouses there, doo furnishe all Europe with such kinde of necessarie traffique.

The infortunat Perillo, converted wholly (as you see) into a marchante venteror, with no lesse desyer to restore his wealthe with the gaine of his present trade, then earste he had delite to consume all in idle exercise, committes his porcion to his fortune, and, amongest the reste of the adventurers, hoysseth saile, in hope of better spede then it was his chaunce to encounter. For they were not fiftye leagues upon the mayne sea, when they were sharpelye assailed by an angry Neptune; who, mislikynge theyr voyage, sett a broche the malice of the windes, forcynge the sea to so hyghe a billatt and unruly rage of the waves, that th' impetuositie of the tempeste toke awaye the force of the pylottes and maryners, in suche sorte, as beinge no longer hable to resiste the furye of the storme, committed theim selves and shipp to the mercye of the waves, whiche ceassed not to continue in extreme furye the space of three dayes and nightes without intermission; in whyche tyme theyr fortune had put theim uppon the coaste of Barbaria, where the malice of the windes appaised, and the sea retired to his ordinarie quiete. Albeit th' ignorance of the coaste and countrey (a common enemye to all christendom) offred theim cause of newe feare, yet the viewe of their late perill passed, mortefyed all suggestion of newe sorowe, and procured theim to a more congratulacion then if they hadd alredye performed their expedicion, and were saflye arrived in the harbor of Levant.

But Fortune, who had yet another acte of tragical malice to presente unto thies wretches, lay in waite to assaile them with a seconde desaster, more extreme then the firste, whose alaram made a convercion of their hymnes and psalmes of rejoycinge into teares and dollorous exclamacions. For as they lay at anker, in the evenyng, when the nighte began to cover the earthe with his darke mantell, beholde a pirott of the Mores (partaker also of the malice of their tempeste) beset theim upon a soddaine with certeine brigandines (most fitt vessells to do a mischiefe in a calme), and charged theim so whotly on all sides, that beinge alredye forwearied with the tormente of their peril passed, and not hable to expose sufficient resistance to their unrulye force, were layde aborde wyth small effucion of blood, their goodes spoiled, and theim

Perillo taken prisoner and his goods spoiled.

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selves caryed prisoners to Thunys, to lyve in extreme miserye under the servile yoke of the barbarous nations.

Here yf the maister cried oute for the loss of hys shipp, the mariners to be deprived of theyr hyer, and the marchantes to see the spoile of theyr goodes wyth hindrance of theyr venture, I leave you to be judges of the passion of pore Perillo, who, dispairinge to be redemed, for that his whole substance was committed to pillage in that misfortune, exclaimed againste th' iniquitie of the godes, for that they seamed to favour his miserye with a tearme of longer lyfe. He wished death mighte make no staye to doo his office, for that he loathed the viewe of his sondrie adversities; and yet he seamed to sorowe more in the losse of his fair Carmosyna then in the dispaire of his raunsom; for the harde bordes of the galleys beinge his bedd in the nyghte, the bare penyworthes and hongrie share of vittailes whiche his kepers presented hym withall, th' extreme toyle and toggінge at the ore, with the smartinge whipp nowe and then aboute his bare sholders, did not so muche tormente hym, as the remembrance of his loste mistres seamed to force hym to doble dollor.

The complaint of Perillo in prison.

'Ah!' saith he, 'to what greater punishment or penance of harde tolleracion colde fortune have enjoyned me, then, in dispairyng eftesones to recover her presence, to force me to recorde her absence in this dollorous and pynyng prison? Had it not bene better for me to have performed the reste of my pleasante life at hoame, and spente the remeinder of my porcion in the supplie of my delicat trade, then loase my whole substance at one blowe, and my selfe coffred in a wretched and stinkinge dongeon? Here maye be noted one chiefe frute of covetous desier, and an effecte of filthie gaine, when the gredie mynde, in goinge about to glott th' appetit of his coffers, leaveth an example of his wretched follie to all ages. Oh! howe happie be they, who, contented with the gifte of a meane fortune, do not seke to loade shippes, and remeine from hower to hower within three inches of death, either to be buried in the bellies of the monsters in the sea, or, beinge caste uppon some deserte shoare, to serve as praye to the devouring jawes of wilde beastes! Was it

not sufficiente, alas! to be touched with the experience of a repulse in love, but that I must fele the heavye hande and mobilitie of Fortune in an element more inconstante then the variable course of the moone? Ah! Carmosyna, what wrong dost thou to my misery, if thy teares do not helpe to lament my distress, seing that, in seking to have the to my wife, I am maryed to a heavie burden of boltes and shackells of yron; and, in place of my mariage bedde with the, my destenies have appoynted me a pillowe of earthe, in a darke and filthie hoale; where, notwithstanding, yf there were any offer of hope eftesones to enjoye thy presence, I coulde easely disgeste the symptomes of my martirdome, and, in attending the happie consente of such good fortune, to make a plaisante exercyse of my presente and paynefull ymprisonment.' The sea.

By this tyme fame had ymparted the desolacion of our venturers to the whole Citie of Naples, not withoute the generall sorowe of all men, and speciall teares of such as were contributarie to the losse. Albeit, makynge of necessitie a vertue, tyme gave ende to their dollor and dismissed theym all with desier to redeme his captiff frende. But Carmosyna, knowyng her Perillo to be one of the miserable nomber, and waighing the circumstance of his mishapp, whiche stode uppon tearmes of more extremitie then all the reste—bothe for that, by the losse of his porcion, she douted to set him on foote againe, and muche more dispaired of meanes to paye hys raunsom—entred into suche presente rage that she was redy to use force againste her selfe. Whereunto she hadd putt an effect, if it had not bene for her governesse, who, reprehending sharply her wilfull follie, appeased at laste (with greate raison) her desperatt intente, convertynge the furious humor of the desolate mayde into a river of teares, distillynge a mayne downe her roasie chekes, complayninge notwithstandynge with tearmes of greef the misfortune of her frende, but chiefly for that her selfe was the principall cause of his ruynous estate, and that the rude aunswere of her father forced him to abandon his countrey for the gaine of a contynuall captivitie.

Carmosina complayneth the misery of Perillo.

'Ah! infortunat girle' (saieth she) 'and insatiable covetusnes in the old age of my father, who, in refusing the

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honest request of Perillo, respected more the masse of filthie treasure then the vertues or good disposicion in the younge man. Why wolde he not consider that the manners of men do chaunge, and of a prodigall youthe procedes a sparing olde man; neither oughte we to dispaire of his recoverie, who, fynding the falte of his owne follie, disposeth him selfe to amendment of life? What cause of care hathe he either of the povertie or richesse of his children after his death, seynge the remembraunce of the worlde dekayeth with the loss of lyfe? Can he carye with hym any care of our advauncement, seynge he is forced to leave behynde hym the thynge whyche is more deare unto hym then the prosperitie or healthe of his children? Yf he presente me with a husbande and porcion of a kingdom, the offer of no millions shall mortefie in me the love I beare my Perillo: neither is it a vertue to sell affection for the price of monie, and muche lesse to seame to love hym, whom my harte cannot brooke; for there is neyther pleasure nor contentement where the mynde is not in quiett.

Riches.

'No! no! lett hym use the skoape of hys crabbed age, and do what he thynkes good. For my parte I will not be desloyall on the behalfe of hym who, I knowe, honoreth me with sincere affection. Neyther shall he lye longe in prison, nor contynue any tyme the sonne of povertie; for I knowe wher be a companie of duckattes, whyche sawe no lyghte since I hadde the use of discrecion, whyche I doute not will bothe pawne his deliverie and furnyshe hym wyth a seconde trade more fortunate (I hope) then the firste. And, for my parte, the greenes of my age gyveth me leave to suspend certeine yeres without any haste to marie.' Wherein she demaunded th' assistance of her governes, who gave her not onely a firme assurance of her ayde, but also promissed a supply of monie towardes the furniture of her expedicion, desieringe her, for the reste, to do awaye all argumentes of dollor, leaste the same discovered her passion to her father. Wherein, as they consumed certeine monethes in devise to deliver Perillo, with secrett practisses in levienge the price of his raunsom, so Fortune began to enter into tearmes of pitie towardes hym, and prevented the meanyng of his mystris by

takyng hym oute of prison in sorte as you shall heare. Wherein albeit she exceded the mayde with spede in execucion, yet oughte wee to gyve the title of worthie thankes to Carmosyna, whose example of vertue in this case I wishe maie sommon a remorce to our lighte and inconstante dames nowe a dayes; who are so incerteine in true affection, that the respecte of presente pleasure takes awaye the remembrance of their absente frende, and maketh theim unmyndfull of the faith of their former promisse. Wherin I am not provided to enter into argument at this presente, bothe for that I dout to gaine displeasure in discoverynge a truth, and also suche discourse is without the compasse of my comission, whiche is nowe to recompte unto you the deliverie of pore Antonio.

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A speciall chalenge.

Olde Minyo, the father of Carmosyna, had joyned with hys richesse and desyer of worldly gaine, certeine vertues and commendable giftes, as veraye devote in visiting the churches and places of prayer, of a charitable disposicion in releving the distresse of th' afflicted, and so full of compassion on the behalfe of the nedie that seldome any pore man departed from hym emptie handed. Besides he extended a merveilus charitie and acte of pitie to the desolate captives amongeste the Moares, in suche sorte, as making every yere a voyage into Barbaria, he made an ordinarie to redeme and bring awaie with hym ten or twelve Christian prisoners; of whome, suche as were hable restored the price of their raunsom whithout any interest, thinkinge the gaine sufficient in that he was the cause of their deliverie, but the reste he sente frelie into their countrey, exspectynge the meede of that vertue at the handes of God, with this onely charge, that, in remembrance of the benefit, they wold not forget him in their privat praiers. The gifte of welth was not evill bestowed upon this marchant, considering he was thankefull in ymparting it to the poore, accordinge to th' admonicion of the gospell. But howe manye maye a man reckon in England that excedes hym in riches, and skarce one of semblable vertue? For the perversatie of our age is comme to that pointe that wheare our fathers and grandfathers delited in workes of charitie, with care to supplie the neces-

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sitie of suche as did wante, our *Helloes* and golphes of riches do not only close their eares against the lamentable cries of the needie, but also make no conscience to dispoile theim, either by awe, feare, or flattery, of that litle which their fortune hath lefte theim; in such sorte that almes and devocion seames such straungers and so litle knowen amongest men now a dayes, that, of thies fewe that soccour the poore, the moste parte do it rather of vaine glorie, or to condemne the barbarus disposicion of hys neyghbor, then for compassion on the behalfe of him that standes in nede. Hospitalitye is also so unknowen amongeste us, that where oure auncestors buylded houses, endowinge theim with sufficient revenues to susteyne th'impotent and nedye persons, with free annuities and other meanes of releefe, how many of the members of Christe do we see in our tyme, voyde of harbour to shroode their naked bodies, full of diseases, pinched with extremitie of honger and colde, redie to give upp the ghost at the gate of the richeman, and not relived with so muche as the cromes that fall from his table! I borowe thusmuche on the office of the preacher, not with intent to charge hym any waye with imputacion of negligence in the pulpit, touching his admonicion to his people to assiste the distresse of suche as God visiteth with the rodde of affliction, but, in presenting our marchantes with a familiar example of the office and dutie of a true Christian, to sturr theym to the ymytacion of the like vertue; and, in beinge ashamed that suche as have gone affore us have carried with theym to heaven all effectes of charitie, to dispose theym selves to seame worthye of that whiche they have, by yeldynge a certeyne tenth, or tribute of their goodes, to suche as the scripture tearmeth the deputies of Christe, askinge it in his name.

The poore man demaunding his almes is the deputie of Christ, who saithe what we geve to the nedy we bestowe uppon hym.

But now to our father Minio, who, for that by th'impediment of sicknes was not hable to performe his voyage to Thunys in person duringe the yere of ymprisonment of the Napolytans, gave charge to certeine his factors to redeme ten captives of his countrey, or at leaste to furnishe the nomber with any that professed the Lawe of Christ: which was performed accordingly with such good fortune on the

behalfe of Antonio Perillo, that he enjoyed a perticipacion of the devocion and benefite of Minio, and was sent to Naples, amongest the rest that were redemed; not beinge knowen, notwithstanding, of any of his co-prisoners or other of the company, for that they had not any great enterview together, and much lesse of his famylyar frendes, seinge the penurie of imprisonemente had set a die of hideus complexion upon his face, and his heare and beard, exceding their ordynarie length, had overgrowen certeine speciall markes whiche els had discovered hym more easely. But what can beguile the eye of a lover, or who is hable to conceile from a woman the face of him whose picture she beareth in the bottom of her hart, and whose remembrance death hym selfe is skarce hable to deface? Carmosyna, which made her thought a loking glasse to beholde every day th'ymage of her Perillo, had no soner glaunced simplie upon him but she knew it was he, who for her sake had passed the panges of so manye tormentes. Wherewith, no lesse glad of his retorne then hee doble dowtfull of the contynuance of her good wyll, wrought so muche by the sleighte of her governesse, that she had place of conferrence with hym in secrete; where, after certeine congratulacions of his delyverye, shee exposed tearmes of compforte in this sorte:—

Perillo redemed from pryson.

'Albeit' (sayth she) 'Fortune hath bene so incensed agaynste you, that she hath neither spite nor malice in store, whereof you have not tasted to th'uttermost force and extremitie, yet your Carmosyna hathe neyther forgot anye parte of th'auncient goodwil she hath borne you, nor muche lesse entred into the leaste contempte that maye be ymagyned: but, where a nomber of other ladies would have dismissed their affection at the firste sommonce of adversatie, I am here to advouche an undowted contynuacion of zeale, wyth a treble increase of true love towardes you. Wherof I am also to yelde you a presente proofe in doble sorte, the one wyth an assurance of reciprocal amytie, until th'extreme date of my dayes, the other, in consideracion that your povertie proceded by my meanes, I have provyded a seconde supplie of monie to renewe eftesones your traffique, which, being guided by a better fortune, wil yelde you

Carmosyna comfortethe Perillo.

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(I hope) a successe of such commoditie as my father will denye you no more the title of hys sonne in lawe; whereof for my parte I pronownce (from th' instante) suche confirmacion as is in me to performe.' These newes unloked for sturred upp a traunce of such alteracions in the trobled mynde of Perillo, that, what with the gredie desyer his eyes had to feede upon her bewtie, whych he had not regarded of longe tyme but by inwarde contemplacion, and the passion of present gladnes in th' assurance of her love, wyth a franke offer of spedie assistance to restore hys trade, he had neyther the use of hys tongue to expose tearmes of thankes, and much lesse the consent of hys sences to beleve that which he hard. But as one Zenopholus attending the aunswere of hys oracle, or soddeinly striken wyth a dome appoplexie, stode, as immovable as th' ymage of Saint Petre in the Capitoll of Rome, till she rechargde hym wyth a seconde consolacion, and withall presented hym wyth certeine bagges full of duckattes, wherof she wylled hym to defraie the value of his raunsome to the factors of her father, and dispose the rest in a seconde venture for marchandise. Which he performed accordinglie wyth the benefyt of so good tyme and fortune, that, sailyng with a prosperus wynde to Levant, he made hys markett to such advantage, that in hys reatorne to Naples, th' increase and gaine of his trade redemed every possession which earst he solde, and left hym besides sufficiente to furnishe his lackes in every respecte; in suche sorte, as the common judgemente passed that his welthe was nothinge inequall to the richesse of his father, and his present state as plentiful of all thinges as the first day he seased uppon the coffers and remaine of olde Perillo. Amongest the rest of the frendes of Antonio whyche rejoysed his happie fortune, Carmosyna, I am sewer, was not leaste glad, chiefly for that she sawe her father begin to grow in delite with the doinges of the younge man; who, for his parte, also, renewinge a dayly increase of affection towardes his mistres, was in devise by what meanes he might eftesones bord the goodwil of her father, whom he judged colde use small reason in refusinge his requeste, seinge his richesse were equall to th' appetit of his gredie mynde, and his possessions and patry-

mony nothing inferior to the best of the citie. Wherfore, for the more honor and solemnitie of the demand, he sent hys uncle to sommon the faire Carmosyna in sorte of lawfull mariage, with an offer of dowry at the discrecion of her father; who, not ignorante of the league of longe love betwene his doughter and Perillo, whome hee knewe to have firste entred into chaunge of lyfe for the onely respect of her favor, thought it as great conscience to condiscende as they had reason to make the request. Wherupon, addinge an effect of expedicion to their present agrement, the bale of contract was drawen and the mariage published ymediatly betwene Antonio Perillo and the faire Carmosyna, to the speciall contentment of theim selves and singler pleasure of the parentes on both sides; which notwythstandinge was unhappelye abbridged, contrarye to all their exspectacions, by the malice of a pitifull accident which fell upon theym the very night of their mariage in the house of th' old Minio. It was in the middest of the moneth of June, at what time the heates beinge most vehemente, do force terrible thonders and rage of weather in great extremitie, by certein drye vapours and exhalacions whych the hoat ayre draweth up from the drye earth; when, as our infortunat lovers were newe gon to bedd, devisinge together of their sondrie misfortunes since the beginninge of their love; and as they disposed theym selves to discharge the pleasante shot of mariage, Behold! the eleamentes above, converting theym selves into angrie regardes, sett abroche the roaring noyse of the fearefull thonder, with suche ympetuositie of blusteringe windes, that the trees and houses of depe foundacion in the earthe, where not hable to resiste their furie, together with an unnatural openynge of the skye, whereby the whole earthe seamed to borne with a glowe or fearefull flame of lyghtenynge. At laste the ayre, not hable to conteine the heate, was forced to avent; when a man myghte have seene fall, in waters and places of fyrme ground, diverse stones of sondrie formes, some square, some rownde, some forqued, and others longe piked at both endes of the sharpnes of a nedell, derived, be like, of the congealed substance of the heat and vapours of the ayre. Whereof (as the feare of the tempest

Perillo and Carmosyna maried.

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Perillo and his wiffe slaine with a thonderbolte.

hadd dryven the bride and bridgrom to embrace one an other) so one of the sayd fatall mynisters of destenye, whyche we call properly thonderboltes, darted with suche vehemencie uppon the one and other lover, percynge the place of lyfe of theim bothe, that it gave ende to their pleasure and life at one blowe. Here you see, that he whych escaped a merveilous peril of shyp wrake, and was delivered out of the hands of the barbaryans when he dispayred of all releefe, is not hable to shon the furie of the heavens and inclemencye of his fates, and muche lesse to excede the momente whyche his destinie determyned upon hym. Albeit, if there be any one sparke of pleasure in suche misfortune, he was assysted with a moderacion in the greatnes of hys distresse, both for that he dyed in the armes of her whome he loved no lesse then hymselfe, and also hadd her companie to hys grave whome he cold not enjoye being on live but in thoughte and inwarde regarde. Such was the end of his love. Wherin, sewer, if Love were a creature of either sence or feling, he deserved to be reprehended of injustice, for that he is pertiall, and showeth favor, not only to such as practise the sleighte of thefte and stealth in amarus affaires—I meane such as, albeit they dare not advow their lascivious and wanton trade, yet he guydes theim saffelye to the praye of theyr desyer, and retournes them without the offer of perill—but also giveth good successe to theim, that, dissemblinge with the vertue of true loyaltie, have no other respecte but to satisfye the glott of their voluptuouse pleasure: where, on the contrarye, this infortunat Perillo embracing his wife in chaste and honeste sorte, was no lesse unjustly revenged then cruelly smothered by the fyery force of thonder. Whiche strange kinde of death gave no small amaze to the whole citie of Naples, bothe for the rarietie of th' accident, and also the greate wronge whiche the guider of amarus destinies semed to do to the loyaltie of the younge man; who deserved a better consideracion for his sondrie distresses, then a fatall suffocacion, or deadlye blowe of the heavens in the firste begynnynge and earnest penny of his pleasure with his deare Carmosyna; with whom he was shrined in a tombe of marble, wyth a certeine epitaphe in Latten, whiche I have here

composed in our vulgary verse; whiche it maye please your ladishipp to ymagine to heare pronounced by the mouth of the dead Perillo, appearynge halfe out of his grave, in his sheete, trussed at eyther ende wyth a fatall knott, speakynge with a voice of terror according to his ghastelye regarde.

The Epitaphe

UPON THE TOMBE OF PERILLO AND CARMOSYNA

From cloddye Couche rise upp, consumed corse !
You captive knightes, whom Cupide sterude with care,
And lovers ye that lyve, comme take remorce
On two, that founde suche death as happs but rare.
See here the sheete that shroudes such faithfull twayne
As selde are founde to serve in loyall trayne.

Fowre winters long I ranne a carefull race,
Wherin I founde the frutes of crabbed fate ;
Ne colde I gett the graunte of Fortune's grace ;
But, pinched still with panges of misers' state,
I felt the force of every mortall blaste :
There was no yll wherof I did not taste.

My folly forcde a fall of all I hadd,
And frendes forsoke me in my greatest nede :
My rentes retird with route of roisters trade,
And fancy fedd me with the foode of evill spede.
I soughte to sowe the seedes of stayed lyfe,
When lo ! I cropt the frutes of greater stryfe.

And thoughe the seas did spite my good intent,
Yet did they spare to spill me in their sandes ;
But adding force to that, which long my fates have ment,
My goodes and I, fell in the pirottes handes :
Wher I, in person pinchd with every pang of care
My pennance paide, with many a hongry share.

Ne was my love devoide of lyke annoye,
Syth she with equall grieff paid tribute to my paine :
She weard her youth in dule in steade of joye :
The viewe of my mishapps bredd wo in every vayne :
Her pleasant tyme pass'd in continuall teares,
Whose sooddes aye bathd her greene and mayden yeres.

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But oh ! geve care ! when we by happy lott
Did deame to finde the ende of all distresse,
And as in bedd we hopte to chaunge the note
Of former paine to perfect joyfulnes,
Behold ! alas ! the flagg of fatall wrathe
Orespred us both with panges of present death.

Oh heavy happ ! oh perversd destenie !
Oh lyves ay framd in mould of wretchednes !
And borne to weare the wreathe of miserie.
From all that earst have felt distresse ;
He is most cursd wose state is so opprest
That in his lyfe fyndes no one daye of rest.

Resigne your tearmes, and tunes of auncient woo,
Who earst have wept in teares of equall greeff.
No two on lyve, nor all that slepe belowe,
More loyall weare, aye wantinge still relieff,
Then we whose pictures here are placd in depe,
And shrowded both within the fatall sheete.

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A WONDERFUL CONSTANCIE in DOM DIEGO; who, for the respecte of GENIVERA LA BLONDE, undertoke a harde pennance uppon the Mountes Pyrenei; where he ledd the lyfe of an hermytt, till hee was found out by chaunce by one of hys frendes, by whose help hee recovered both favor and mariage of hys cruell mistres.

GEFFRAIE FENTON'S

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THE ARGUMENT

The tragicall chaunces happeninge to th' infortunate sorte of this world, albeit, at the firste, do present a certeine bitter tast with unsaverye disgestion; yet who syfteth theym to the quicke, construinge rightly everye cause of their commyng, and vertue in operacion, wil not only judge theim necessarie for some respectes, but also discerne in theim an indifferent proffit and pleasure to all degrees of present being, but specially to future posterities, who may learne, by the view of former illes, to eschewe the like harmes in theim selves. And because every thinge is appointed his peculiar season, and al actes can not agre with every time and al places, I have devised, that as I began my histories with a comiqual discourse, so I intende to knit up with a tragicomiqual reaport, treating chiefly upon the selfe same subject, which the fonde do commonly prefer as a speciall coverture or sheelde of their faltes.

Love.

Th' experience is not straunge, nowe a dayes, what humor of rage doth directe our fraile youth, governed by the planet of love, and what mortall inconvenience dothe and wold springe thereupon, if reason served not in some sorte as a moderacion of our follie, even from the cradle to the ful maturitie of our age, quallefyeng besides by wholsom principles the heate of our wilfull appettites. Wherin, like as amongest all the tyranous enemies which afflicte the bodie or mynde of man, he only gloriethe of force to alter our propper nature, what perfection soever it ymporte, converting our libertie into a disposicion of servile thraldome, guided only by the reyne of his discrecion; so amongest the nomber of authorities heretofore alledged for the profe of the same I have thought good to preferr an example of our tyme, happening in a gentleman of Catalonia, who, declaringe in him selfe by his to great constancie two extremyties of love and follie, hath also painted out the picture of a gentlewoman, no lesse light and inconstante, then Love, and such as followe his loare, be vaine, seing the small vertue whiche assistes their fonde indevor, and slender commoditie growinge by their uncerteine service.

TRAGICALL DISCOURSES

PON the confynes of Catalonia, devyding Barcellonia and the mountes, lived not long since an auncient lady, the wydowe and late wife of a knight of that countrey, who left her only a daughter to supplie hym in succession, and give comforte to the desolacion and olde yeres of her mother; in whom appered rather a fonde zeale then awfull diligence in th' education of her childe, for that she semed more willinge to flatter the vaine humor of her young yeres, then carefull to reprehend the argumentes of wanton disposicion apperinge in the younglinge; who, besides her curius shapp of body and lymmes, with wonderful perfection of bewtie, whercin nature gloreth yet of her conninge, was assisted wyth so fayre a haire, fallinge by devyne arte in to crisped lockes, devydynge theym selves (as it were by appointmente) that the golde, purifyed and tryed by the flame of the furnaise, seamed but a darke metall in respecte of the glisteringe glee of her curled haire; whereby shee was called of all men Genivera *la blonde*. Not far from whose castell or place of abode was the dwelling of an other vertuouse wydow, of noo lesse estimation for her riches and large dominions then the other, and of equall honour and renowme for honeste life; who, havynge only the presence of a son to restore the remembrance of her deade husbande, used no lesse care to brynge hym upp in the discipline of every vertue, studie of good letters, together with a participation in th' exercise of all noble recreacions convenient for a gentleman of his condicion and calling, then the faire Genivera reapposed felicitie in the beautie of her glorious heare. Wherein, to assiste the natural towardines of her son, she sent him to Barcelonia, the chefest citie of the countrey; where Fortune favoured his diligence with suche dexteritie in all thynges, that, uppon the eyghtenth yeare of his age, his perfection in learnyng, with wonderfull sleyghtes in exployte of chivalrye,

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gave cause of shame to all gentlemen and other degrees what so ever, norrished and bredd upp in the lyke exercises. Whyche sturred upp suche contentemente in the good ladie, hys mother, that she knewe not with what countenance to cover the pleasure shee toke in the felicitie of her sonne, a falte familiar enoughe to a nomber of fonde menne, and a vice moste common to all mothers; who, glorienge in the towardenes of their children, do flatter theym selves with an uncerteine hope of their future vertue. Wherein they do indifferente wronge to their owne ymagination, and advauncement of theyr wilfull and wanton youth, who, blynded with vayne perswacion of creditt of their parentes, do thynke theymselves dispensed with all frome further diligence, or to expose effectes of other dutie. Whereuppon followeth often tymes a nomber of indifferent myshappes to theym bothe with cause of equall rebuke to the one and the other. And pursewyng the queste of my hystorye, it happened in the florishynge yeares of thys younge gentleman Dom Diego, that Phillipp of Austriche, onely heyre to hys father newlye deceased, passynge thorowe Fraunce towardes Spaine to investe hym selfe in the seignories of hys late father, gave warnynge of hys comynge to the citie of Barcelonia; who, for their parts, entred ymediatly into devise touchinge the pompp and magnifisence wherewith they mighte do honor to the majestye of so great a prince as the son of the Emperour of the Romaines. Amongest other solemnities they dressed a riche and curious just, furnyshynge the listes onely with younge gentlemen here to fore not greatly experienced in the use of armes. Whereof, as Dom Diego was chosen chiefe of th' one parte, so the kyng (for a more contentement to hys subjectes) beynge uppon the skaffolde to judge the loftie corage of thies younge gallandes, had onely his eyes upon the younge Diego, with a wonderfull admiration of his force in so young yeres, arguyng an undowted vertue with th' increase of further age; to whome onelye he awarded the glorie of the feelde, with protestation that in hys lyfe he hadd not seene a medly better performed, seamynge rather a battaile or combatt of experienced knyghtes, then an exercise of delicate

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youth, not yet accustomed to beare the burden of armour, and lesse acquainted with the travell of warr. Wherewith, aswel in consideracion of the present towardnes in the wydowe's son, with corage to contynue hys trade so well begon, as also to feede the hope and showe of his future vertue, he was admitted the nexte mornynge into the order of knigthode, invested with the coller of Sainte Andrewe, and other ceremonies of Spaine, by the hande of the sayde Philipp; who, after he had fulfilled the date of his abode at Barcelonia, pursewed his jorney towardes Castile, leavyng our newe knyghte Dom Diego rejoysinge not a litle in his presente honor ymparted unto him by his prince, retiring with the newes of his good fortune to his owne possession, and living more to performe th' arrerages of his dutie to his mother, whom he hadd not sene of longe tyme, then with intente to make longe staye there, or enter into delite with the pleasures that be in the countrey; wherof, notwithstanding, he received so sewer a taste that his captivitye, in the ende, exceded everye waye in greatnes of greff the restrainte of libertie, or other mislike or impedimente, he founde at any tyme in the citye. Like as also the poetes have ymagined that Love, pitchinge his tentes in deserte places not apte to discoverye, dothe discharge his dartes and arrowes in the thicket of woddes and forestes, uppon the borde of the sea or shaded fountaines, and some tyme uppon the heighte of the highest hilles, in the pursewte of the *nimphes* of all sortes; judginge thereby a libertie and moste sewer waye to treate uppon matters of love, without suspicion, jelousye, envie, false reaporte, synister opinion, or common crye of the people, to be in the wide and open feldes, where they maie be bolde to communicate their mutuall passion without feare of witnesses; enjoyinge also the pleasures of all kinde of chasses, whiche the champion doth norrishe, with participacion of the chirpinge harmonie and naturall musicke of birdes, and somtime the delitefull noyse of sondrye pleasante chanels and silver streames, qualyfyinge in their kinde the vehemencie of their languishinge greeffe, and recordinge, also, with greate ceremonie the firste place of their amarus enterview

Dom Diego made knyghte.

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or acquaintance; arguynge thereby treble felicitie to suche, as, abandonynge the sondrie annoyes attendynge continuall abode in the citie, do resort to the pleasant lawndes in the countrey to yelde tribute of their studies to the muse wherunto they be most affected: so Dom Diego, beinge at hoame, loved enterely of his mother, and served with all dutifull obedience of his subjectes and servantes, after his ordinarie howers of studie were passed, used his chiefe pleasure in th'exercise of the felde—I meane some tyme to dislodge the great and loftie hart, to dresse the toiles, to entrappe the wilde boare, and some tyme to trye the goodnes of his hawke with the mayne winge of the hearon or fearefull partridge, in the stuble feldes or valleys envyroned with huge hills: wherein one daie amongest the reste, hunting the wilde goate which he had forced from his habitation of the high and craggie rockes, he sawe, launsing afore hym, a harte whiche his dogges had rozed, and so hoatly pursewed, that (to his judgement) he seamed more then halfe spente. Wherewith, as well for the pleasure whiche the pastyme it selfe did offer hym, as also to ease the traveile of his howndes, he putt spurres to his horse, forcynge hym to a mayne gallopp; wherein he continued till his houndes, loasinge the tracke of theyr praye, were at defalte, and hym selfe without the sighte and hearyng of all hys men, wyth suche ignorance of the coste where he was, that he knewe no readie waye of retourne to his companie, and muche lesse the place where his fortune had put hym, grevynge moste in this perplexitie that his horse, beinge oute of breath, refuced (for wante of force) to carye hym anye further. Wherfore, after he hadd blowen divers calls for his men, without other aunswere then an eccho of the woddes and waters, he devided his distresse into two pointes, the one to dismounte and ease the wearines of his horse, the other to retire backe by the same path whyche broughte hym thither. Wherin his expectacion was no lesse frustrate then hym selfe deceived by the malice of his fortune; for that, meanyng to take the next way to his castell, he mett with a contrarye pathe, whiche, after he had travelled the moste parte of the afternoone, broughte

hym, in the ende, within the viewe of a stately house, builded uppon the side of a hill; whiche, by certeine markes appearinge on th'uttermoste partes of the house, albeit argued the contrarie of his intente, yet, hearinge the bable of certeine hunters, ymagininge the same to be his people, drewe neare the place, whiche discovered (above his exspectacion) a companie of strangers, beinge certeine servantes of the mother of Genivera, whiche attended their mistres wyth a brase of younge greyhownds that had newlye ronne a hare to deathe. And, beinge thus rencountred with this seconde misfortune, he grewe also into tearmes of greater distresse then afore, for that th'approche of the nighte, begynninge to expose shadoes of darknes uppon the earth by the departure of the son, toke from hym all hope of other harbor then the offer of some hollowe tree, or greene bedd uppon the grounde; when lo! th'auncient ladye, discernynge betwene the viewe of her eye and regardes of the clowdes, whiche hadd not yet cloased in the lyghte of the firmamente, the shadowe of a man discendynge from the uppermost parte of a hil wyth his horse in his hande, seamynge by his majestie, marching with the semblance of a prince, to be some degree of honor, sente one of her men to knowe what he was, who reatorned with aunswere accordynge to his demaunde. Wheruppon, the ladye wydowe with her faire doughter, indifferently gladd of th'approche of theyr neyghbour—whome albeit they never sawe, yet fame had made theim partakers of his vertue and renowme—wente in solemne order to mete hym, forgettynge no kynde of curtesye gretyng that belonged to the honor and estate of so noble a personage. Whereunto he replied with thankes accordinge to the greatnes of the benefytt, with addition that he founde hym selfe greatly in the favor of Fortune, for that his painefull traveile in wandryng so many howers had given hym at laste so fit an occasion to visitt the house. Whereunto, he dowbted not for his parte to confirme the league of frendshipp begon and happelye continued of longe time by his parentes and predecessours. The ladye, whose longe absence from the courte had not diminished her grace in courtelike conference, aunswered, that if they have

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greatest cause of contentemente that gaineth the moste, or if large benefittes require ample consideration, it is she that ought to offer to fortune the sacrafize of thankesgevinge, for that she hadd brought her a guest no lesse deare then the life of her selfe, and as welcome as if the Kynge of Spaine had don her the honor to visytt her castell: whiche sturred upp in hym a seconde offer of his service, not onelye on her behalfe, but also towardes the leaste ymppe deryved of her house. Wherewith Genivera, to assiste the contentmente of her mother in the companye of the younge knighte, with the pleasure she toke her selfe in his semely conference, craved (in smylynge order) a participacion in peculiar of the liberall offer whiche he exposed by generall tearmes to her mother and her whole house. Dom Diego, whiche had not yet exceded an ordinarie regarde in beholdynge the beautye of the younge ladye, founde cause, in the misterye of her woordes, to glaunce wyth more judgement uppon her; in suche sorte that, at the instant, he felt him selfe assailed with such soddaine alteration, that his astonishment woulde not give hym leave to aunswere otherwayes then with a percynge glee of his eyes, fedynge with firme contemplation upon the freshe dye of white and red appearinge in all partes of her divine face. Wherein, also, for a more decoracion of this wonderfull worke of nature, th'attire of her heade presented suche an artificiall devise, that it seamed she had (the same daye) some fore knowleage of the commynge of hym whome her beautye made prisoner, and her crueltye enjoyned a moste harde and longe penance: for she had uppon the uppermoste parte of her heade a call, or coronet of golde, restynge uppon a wreath or garlande of flowers of sondrie coollers, pletted by curious sleighte of the fingers within her enameled haires, whiche, coverynge one parte of her sholders, dispersed theym selves also some time uppon her delicate forehead, and some tyme wafynge uppon her roasye cheekes, accordyng to the mylde breathe of the evenynge winde whiche gave theym movynge, disposed theymselves with suche seamelye grace, with increase to the beautye of her that weare theym, that who had sene the porte and majestie whiche joyned to this

The first meting and words betwen Diego and Genivera.

A discription of th' attire and beautye of Genivera.

rare worke, woulde have judged that love and the three graces had had no other place of harbor but in this pece of wonderful perfection. At either of her eares hong two faire and riche Orient perles, whiche increased also the glee of her golden haires; besides the large and glistering forehead of this nymphe, whereuppon was sett a border of riche diamondes, founded uppon a frame of pure golde, castynge suche pearcynge glymers to the beholders, that it presented rather a ranke or order of shynynge starres, when the elamente in the heate of the sommer is moste cleare, exposynge beames of wonderful bryghtnes, then an attire of a mortall creature. Whereuppon attended two sparklynge eyes, assisted on eyther syde by an equall *simmetria*, or juste proporcion, with certeine knottes and borders of vaines of the cooller of azure, with a speciall vertue to drawe and mortefie any harte made of the hardeste mettall that ever was, yeldynge so liberallie their fervent beames, that who so disposed hym selfe to contemplacion of thies two twinklyng starres, was in no lesse daunger to loase the benefitt of hys sighte then, in tymes paste, wee reade, certeine philosophers became blinde, uppon the mounte Olympium, with continual regarde of the sonne to judge the dispocicion of the heavens. Then appered her delicate nose, aunsweringe in proportion the reste of her face, devidynge also her two chekes, of the coollor of a fyne incarnatt, resemblynge two rounde aples come alredie to the fulnes of their maturitie. Nexte to the whyche succeded her courall mouthe, breathinge a perfume more precious and sweete then any confection made of the amber muske, or other droge aromatike comynge oute of Arabia. And if some tyme she chaunced to disclose and open her lippes, resemblyng in roundnes and collour two cheris in their full ripenes, excedyng also the softnes of any thinge that ever was accompted delicate or tender, there appered twoo rawes of perles, of suche rare whitenes, that th'Orient, I say, complayneth of wante of connyng to make comparison with the coullor of her teethe. And so, discending some what lower, this Dyana discovered a necke, whose complexion giveth cause of shame to the whitnes of the glorius lillie, and makes blushe the pure allablaster: her stomake also, some what

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raised by two rounde and precius dugges of equal seperation, was covered with a brave and softe vaile, more tender then the thyn lawne, whyche hyndred no waye the viewe of her travellynge brestes, panting and drawinge a pleasante breathe, accordyng to the motion of th'affection whyche governed th'inner partes of the thoughtes of this earthlie goddesse; who, besydes all thys, was assisted with a gyfte of suche naturall beautie, bestowinge courteise regardes uppon all men accordyng to their indifferent meritt, that the same made her no less worthie to bee honored and served of the greatest princes of the worlde, then the rarietie of her perfection restored her a merveile and wonder to all menne: whyche is a vertue farre from the moste parte of our faire dames, who, glorienge in the glee of their beautie, are moved I can not tell with what opinion of suche disdaine, with desier to appere more perfecte then is necessarie, that, in sekyng to sette a fairer enamel of that whyche nature hathe made sufficientlye precious, they do not only impaire the credit of renowme by suborned meanes of ymperfection of theym selves, but also, by their owne follye, deface the glorie of that whyche sturreth upp the chiefest cause of affection in men to do theym honor and service. Wherein, as my purposse is not to discover the doinges of any in such cases, so I hope this allegation of a troth in covarte manner will defende me from the displeasures of suche as fynde theym selves infected with the humor of that follie. Wherwith, in preferrynge my integretie, I wishe theym all as worthie as they are desierous to weare the badge of glorious beautie. And so to Dom Diego, whome I thynke you will judge hadde sufficient cause of astonishement, beynge so valyantlye assailed, without thynkynge of such an assalte, wyth so stronge an armye as the beautie, behaviour, and princely shapp, of this faire ympp and veraye nestcockle of nature. Aye! I thynke that the moste sparynge pilgrym that ever undertoke to mortefye hys bodye with painefull travell in devocion to anye sainte, wolde have renounced his vowe, and caste a waye bothe skripp and staff, to have donne honour to so faire an objecte as the beautie of this nymphe; and I doubte whether the moste assured and staide philosopher of

olde tyme wolde have made any conscience to forsake his profession of contemplacion of naturall thinges, with judgemente of th'elamentes, to have disposed him selfe and skil to the service of so rare a perfection. I thynke, also, that if the doughter of Mynos hadd bene favored with semblable beautie, and blyssed with equall giftes and grace of this ladie, that her Hipolites wolde have lefte the shippe and dogges of Dyana, to have pursued the queste of so divine a misterye as appeared in all partes of this Genivera *la blonde*; who, for her parte also, was indifferently amazed and no lesse astonied with the porte and courtelike behaviour of the knyghte, then he moved to scilence with the viewe of her beautie: Wherewith, also, castynge uppon hym certeyne regardes at unwares, began to fele a motion of that wherein she hadd not bene earste experienced, with an alteration in her harte whyche forced a chaunge of complexion in her face, with a soddayne scilence for wante of audacitie to speake—an ordynarie custome to suche as bee strycken with the disease of love, to loase the use of the tounge when it sholde chyefly ease the greeff of the harte, who, not hable to supporte the heavie burden of passions procedynge of that evill, dothe ymparte the greatest charge to the eyes, as to the faythfull messengers of the secrett conceptions of the mynde, whyche, passioned above his force, and pressed with th'alarams of affection, is driven for the moste parte to force a vente or yssue for the humour of hys desier by the same meane and ministers whych firste discovered the rage of his fever. Whereof there seamed alredie a *sympathia*, or equalitie, betwene the two younglinges, beynge bothe indifferently ignorante of the misterie or cause of suche soddaine transmutacion, whyche also grewe to tearmes of aggravacion in theym both by a renovacion of their gretyngs and enterteinementes at their arrivall at the castell; the same servynge as freshe baytes to encrease their desier, havynge, notwithstandyng, chiefeste power on behalfe of the knighte, who, losyng at this firste meting the liberty of his thoughtes, becam, by litle and litle, so ravished of his sences, and drowned in the poysoned poole of love, that he toke no other pleasure then in the conceyte of the gracious martir-

Genivera falleth in love with Diego.

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dom he endured in the secrett ymaginacion of the beautie of his faire Genivera. Here you maye see the knyghte, who in the mornyng was the mayster of hym self and in full possession of his sences, is nowe so transformed into a contrary disposicion, that his willynge bondage and state of presente captivitie is not only more pleasante unto hym then the benefitt of his auncient lybertie deare, but also kepte hym so longe from the use of his former fredome that in the ende he tooke no felicitie yf not in wyshynge to enjoye th' other worlde: whyche for the moste parte are the frutes of this follie, who, seelynge the sences of man, dothe drive hym heade longe (with his eyes cloased) into the golphe of miserable dispaire. And as love procedes no other wayes then of a fonde opynion, so the purgatory of suche as bee afflicted therewith, comes only by a foolyshe perswacion that they be forsaken or deceived in the thing which they honor so much: wher, of the contrary parte, yf they wolde be indifferente betwene their passion and his valewe they wolde not so rashelye make more accompte of the thynge whyche tormentes theym, then of their healthe, honour, and life, exposed al to the service and appetit of her, who, disdainynge peradventure their indevor, retorne the meede of their merit uppon a straunger, and yeldes the praye to an other for the whyche he hathe taken suche paine: whereby he takes occasyon of absolute dispayre, delytynge in nothynge but the perentory ende of his unhappie lyfe.

Love procedes of a fond opynion.

Whileste supper was makinge readie the ladie mother dispatched certeine of her people to seke the servantes of Dom Diego; whereof some had in charge to reaporte his beinge there to his mother, who, for her parte, was no lesse glad then she had cause, chiefly for that the distresse of her son brought hym in the ende to so good an hostesse as her neighbour and only frende of the worlde. In which meane while, the straunger was desiered to supplie the beste place at the table; over agaynste whom was appointed the matche that firste set his harte on fyer. And in place to performe the exspectacion of his hostesse in tasting the sondrie delicate meates she had prepared for hym, he fed only upon the dishes of love; and contenting hymselfe with the dyot of

his eyes, who, wythout either let or jelowsie, ymparted their norriture to the harte, roved now and then by secret glaunces and percing regardes to the tender stomake of the faire Genivera; who, for her parte, also was no nigarde to requite hym with treble userye of famyliar glee: which restored suche fresh alarams to his late desier that th' alteracions hee felte in hymselfe made hym blushe at his owne behavior. And as, duringe the tyme of supper, he was indiffrently feasted with delicate brothes prepared by the mother and famyliar signes sente unto hym by the eyes of her doughter, so he felt hymselfe doble passioned, both to conster the meaninge of suche regardes, and also to dym the sighte of th' olde lady for discerning the conveigh of their follie. Wherein, albeit, aswell to caste a miste before the eyes of her mother, as to dissemble the desier of hys mynde, he bestowed his lookes unconstantly here and there abowte all the partes of the table, yet colde he not use suche sleighte in this simple shifte but hys eyes toke alwayes their laste farewell upon the place and person of hys mistres; in whom he founde so thankefull a retorne, with amarus tribute, that in the ende he durst not beholde her any more, for feare her bewtie woulde bereave hym of the benefit and sighte of his eyes. All which were but prepratives to the part he had yet to playe; into the whiche he began to enter the same night, when, after supper, and the banquet performed, he had geven the *bonsoir* to hys hostesse and her faire doughter, who, for a more showe of hys welcome (or rather a declaracion of her zeale) but chiefly to leave hym occasyon of further tormente, would not departe his chamber till she sawe him in bedd; where in place of slepe, and to restore hys wearye body wyth the course of naturall reste, he began to sighe and build castels in Spaine; preferringe in his mynde th' ymages of a thousande fancies and follies suche as are appointed to appeare and torment them as have their braine weakned with vaine cogitacions.

Dom Diego passioned with love.

'Alas!' saith he, 'is it possible that I, whyche so longe have enjoyed the benefitt of a pleasante libertie, shold thus lightlye yelde to the firste sommance and apprehention of a servile thraldom; which, albeit, I can not expresse in propper tearmes, yet my mynde feleth an experience and effecte of his force?

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Is this the desert of my former fredom, or just hier of wanton inclynacion? Yf suche harde tribute attende myne aunciente quiet, what exspectacion of other felicitie is ther in the course of our young yeres, then, for a short time of flattering delites in libertie, to be rewarded in the ende with an interest of treble tormentes in bondage? Have I thus longe kept war with th'ennemye of my free priveledge, and reserved the maydenhead of my affection, to fall thus into the daunger of a captivitie, wher I dowt no lesse whether my offer wylbe received, then dispair to be intreated according to the justice of my merit? Ah! Genivera, God forbid that thy bewtie have power to send so many tormentes and punishmentes to my yelded harte, as the tre wherupon thou takest thy name hath prickes to anoye them that touche it, and bitter indisgestion to such as make a tast of the jewse. Ah! paragon, and only praise of bewtie! sewerly the feare-full hare whych thy dogges tare in peces afore thy face this eveninge was not more martired by the bloudy jawes of thy greyhoundes, then my harte is tormented and devided into dyversatie of opynions uppon the affection whyche I beare the: wherein, alas! as I know not whether thou wilt admit me worthy of thy service, or hast already paste a graunte of thy love to an other more worthye of favor then the loyal Dom Diego, so yet I maye be bolde to vaunte upon thys ympossibilitie, that no man is hable to approche th'unfayned sinceritye of my harte; determyninge rather to geve place to the sentence of my death then to dysmysse the leaste parte of the dutie I have vowed to thy bewtie: whose outwarde showe promiseth an inwarde vertue, that I cannot dispaire to possesse in the ende the due meede of my loyaltie. Til whych tyme I wyll praye onlye uppon the foode of exspectacion, wyth assured intente, for my parte, not onlye to abandon all other ympressions or desiers but suche as shall seame to favor the honor and servyce I have already sworne, but also to endevor, by extreme diligence, to make my selfe worthye of the goodwill of the fairest lady that thys daye is shrowded under the globe or circuit of heaven.' Wherwyth, after he had consumed certeine howers in ravynge and raginge upon hys amarus complot, and that he had suffi-

ciently swett at the browes wyth the force and vehemencye of his passion, he founde the chiefeste medecyn for moderacion of hys greefe to communicate unto her the pointes of hys good wyll, wyth desyer he had, not only to serve her, but also, from henseforth, to accept in good part such sentence as she shall thinke good to pronounce of hys life or deathe, and to do nor say any thyng but such as shal be awarded him by the dome of the faire Genivera: who, for her parte, also, was not voyde of passion, nor dispensed from semblable tormente; for, offringe to performe the ceremonies of the night, she was denied to close her eyes and yet knewe not the cause that hindred the course of slepe. By which meanes making a laborinth of her riche and faire feldbed, she was no lesse assailed with contrariety of conceites then her languishing servant. Wherfore, finding the burden of affection to excede the grenes of her yeres, not yet assisted with any discrecion or experience in love, dytermined to allow the resolucion of the knight, if he ymparted the same either by subtil signes or secrete conference.

Slepe the ceremonies of the night.

This was th' exercise of that nighte of bothe the lovers, equal in desier, and yet the one ignorant of the others greeffe, wastinge indifferently in sighes and wishes, as apprentises of the thinge wherin those that begyn be alwayes most hoat, and such as contynue gaine skill by longe practise; and yet the best experienced of al are voyde of resistance against such an evill, and lacke governement in the conveigh of so hurtfull a case.

Love.

The morninge had no soner discovered her glorious beames, and the messenger of the son somoned the loathsom night to retire, but the weary knight left his restles bedd, with intent to take leave of his hostesse and chalenge the skoape of the larg feldes, to record and enterteine hys amarus thoughts in retorning to hys mother's house. Wherin, notwithstanding, he founde a staie of his meaning by the honest ymportunitie of th' olde lady, who, with more intreatie then was nedefull to so willyng a gueste, won hym easely to determyn hys taryenge till dynner; till whyche tyme he founde a supplye of exercise wyth her companie and conference of her daughter, in whom he sawe contynuall cause to agravat his affection, and doble

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occasion to encrease hys desier, in such sorte as his astonyed countenance and broken aunsweres, ymporting most often the contrary of their demaunds, showed sufficiently the troble and war in his mind; which, albeit the subtil Genivera construed according to a troth, yet her simple mother imputed it to an honest shame and want of audacitie in the gentleman, for that he had not much haunted the company of ladyes. Wherin as they spente the most part of the morning, without, notwithstanding, that Dom Diego had the hart to discover the leaste part of his promise of the night, so the hower of dinner sommoned them to breake their discourse, and performe the due to th' appetit of nature wyth suche delicate and sumpteouse fare as the good lady had provided in declaracion of the hartie zeale she bare to her guest; who, after dinner, failed not in humble sorte to be thankfull to his hostes, with assurance that albeit he was not hable to requite her curtesie with equall consideracion, yet his good will at all tymes sholde be nothinge inferior to the greatnes of her merit. Wherewith he addressed the rest of hys dutie to her daughter, whose bewtie (as you see) had made so great a wound in hys harte that the remembrance remeyned till the last hower of hys lyfe. And as he kissed her hande, with intente to decipher that whych he had ymagined all the night, he became so amazed wyth th' ympedimente he felte in his tongue, with straunge diversatie in all hys sences, that he seamed no lesse ashamed of his present weaknes in that place, then afore he was fullie resolved to discharge the resolucion and meaninge of hys harte. Whych, albeit gave some cause of litle astonishment to the younge lady, yet she founde indifferente occasion of pleasure and pitie in hys passion; for that, as the one proceded by her meanes, so she felt a motion in conscience to expose the other for the relefe of hym who suffred for her sake. Wherefore, with a trobled regarde, tempered with sufficiente argumentes of affection on her behalf, she brake his dome traunce with these wordes:—'I wish, sir' (sayth she) 'that you might fynde asmuch pleasure in your passion as the same hath ymparted equall greefe to others, and that your future absence may pinche you with no lesse annoye

then your present departure leaveth me desyerus to enjoye a longer tyme of your presence.' Whych philosophye, not loked for of the knight, did not only dismysse his scilence and untye the charme of hys tongue, but also renforced hym to an audacitie to yelde her thankes for the compassion she used to hys distres; with addicion that onely he was happye above all the worlde to be partaker of so liberal a wishe, but chiefly to heare her in tearmes of desier touchinge hys presence, whych, wyth hys lyfe and al that he had, he bound ther, by othe, to be preste at all howers to performe th' execucion of her commaundemente. Whereunto she replied with thankes according to the affection that governed her, with request eftsones (and that wyth a reciprocal looke and soft sighe) not to forget hereafter the waye to the castell of her mother, to whom she assured hym the welcomest gueste of the worlde: and, for her parte, she accompted it a felicitye to participate in her pleasure, and kepe in entier the league of frendshipp, wherewith, heretofore, bothe their houses have ben blissed from the beginninge. Wherewith time, with the nomber of assistantes witnessing their glee, forced an abridgement of their farewel, contrarie, albeit, to both their wills; the one retirynge to her chamber with more care and lesse quiet then afore, and the other, with a thousand hamours in his head, tooke his waye to the house of his mother, to whom he ymparted his adventure; his distres beinge lefte of hys men in a place unknowen, his horse overcome with extreme travel; and, that which worste was, th' approche of night, and his dispaire to fynde harbor; when, notwithstandyng, he chanced uppon the castell of the olde ladye, of whose curtesie and beautye of her doughter he made a perticular discourse, leavynge oute notwithstandynge the glee betwene Genivera and hym, wyth requeste that it woulde please her to joyne wyth him in some honeste meane of thankefull consideration to theim bothe. Whereunto he founde his mother no lesse readie in consente, then hym selfe desyerous to use expedicion in th' effecte; so that, wyth her advise, the platt was made to invite theym to her house the weke followynge, and that he alone sholde worke th' effect, like as he founde hym selfe moste charged with

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the dett of their curtesie and desyer to requite it. Whereunto he added suche diligence, that, uppon his letter and humble requeste, he gott the consente of the mother and doughter, whiche bothe failed not of their promiss at the daye appointed.

Genivera and her mother at the house of Diego.

When Dom Diego (havinge for the nonste the assistaunce of all the gentlemen and gentlewomen his neghbours) forgat no pointe of his indevor to do them al the honor he could, both in sumptuousnes of dyot (wherof there was more then sufficient) choice of musicke and melodie of all sortes, masques, momries, triumphes, and other offices of humanitie; wherein it behoved hym chieflye to showe a singler dexteritie, as well for the discarg of every mans eye and exspectation touching a showe of his giftes (beinge norrished and broughte upp amongste princes), and also for the desyer he had to leave no honor unperformed in the companie of her who had already the whole possession of his libertie.

I nede not discrive by pece meale th'apparell of the feaste, the diversitye and chaunge of theyr dyot, theyr delicate banquettes, nor the sondrye sortes of swete wynes. It maye suffice that after dynner they discended into a great hall, readye trymmed for the purpose, where the daunces began accordyng to the stroke of a swete and softe musike, shrowded under a vaile or canapie of arrais in the uppermoste parte of the hall. There everye gentleman toke his ladye; amongeste whome Dom Diego was not forgetfull to addresse him towardes his mistres, no lesse gladd of her happie encounter then he contente to be so neare the cause of his pleasante tormente and insupportable passion of mynde; whereof he began, even nowe, to make some discoverye by wordes in this sorte:—'Like as (good madam) I have alwayes thoughte that musicke hath imported a secrett vertue, to force an apparance of joye in the moste pynynge and solytarye disposicion that is; evenso I fynde myne opinion confirmed by a presente experience in myselfe, who earste languishinge in panges of inwarde greeff, with detestation, not onelye againste myselfe, but also all other thinges that offred any waye to ease the greatnes of myne anoye, do fele nowe some moderation of my martirdom,

Diego woeth Genivera in a daunse.

aswel by the lamentable note of theis recordes and insensible instrumentes agreing with the sorowful condicion of my present distresse, as, also, that, by their conformitie and meanes, I finde myselfe neare unto her, who only hath power to cleare the clowdes of my mortal evil and restore me to the calme of min auncient quiet. And as diverse diseases are not cured but by a medicen and objecte of their first occasion, so, for my parte, beinge contributor to the daunger of that extremitie, I accompte you as justely bounde to yelde me compassion, as your beauty is the chief and undowted cause of th' alteration which I can no longer conceile from you, and which forceth me in thies fewe wordes to vowe unto you (without condicion of dissolution) suche assurance of my service that only death shal have commission to corrupte the league which I seale here on your behalfe, by the faith and life of a knight, to be the only servante, loyal frende (and yf you accepte th' offer), the lawful husband of the faire Genivera *la blonde*.' Who, for her part, felte her selfe so assailed with the motions of affection that she coulde not contynue so assured in her countenance but there appered chaung of coulour, arguynge indifferently a contentement of the offer and a pleasante mislike of his requeste, which rather gave hym corage to pursue the points of his purposse, then desiste or disclayme the hope of so good a begynnynge. Wherein, as he forgat not to use th' office of a good solicitor for hym selfe all that after dynner, so his ymportunitie at laste broughte her to passe a consente, and confirme the bale under thies tearmes:—'I am ignorante, sir' (sayeth she), 'in the misterie of your disease, and muche lesse am I preavie to th' occasion; which bothe, I hope, will defende me from ymputacion of blame in withholdyng the remedie you crave at my hande. Only I can not but greve in the evil of hym, to whom, if the whole companie are justelye bounde to be thankefull for the frendshypp they fynde, I have cause of doble obligation, possessynge, by your presence, the onelye contentemente I wishe in this worlde. Neyther is your affliction partiall on youre behalfe, considerynge I am also plunged in panges of equal effect, finding now (I must confesse unto you) that as

Genivera aunswereth with half consent to his request.

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Yt is harde to conceile the passion of love.

it is veray harde to conceile the passion procedyng of love, so, albeit I hadd determined yet to dissymule that whiche I feele, yet am I forced from that resolution by a suggestion sturrynge in the secrett of my harte, which I can not tearme properly other wayes then a seconde inspiration, assailynge me with an ympression, whereof I am indyfferentlye ignorante, bothe for skyll and judgemente: notwithstandynge, reaposynge muche for myselfe in your vertue, which moveth me also to a remorse to satisfie in some parte the due of your deserte, I am contente to admitt your offer of a loyall frend, till you have obteyned of my mother the seconde pointe confirmyng th' uttermoste of your demaunde. Till then, contente yourselfe with my juste delaye, and procure the supplie of your desier with th' expedicion of your owne diligence.' Whych laste woordes sturred upp suche presente joye in the passioned knighte that, what betwene the waves of sodaine gladnes overflowinge all his partes, and hope of spedie redresse by the consent of her mother, he was skarce hable to pronounce a symple thankes. Albeyt, kissynge her white and delicate hande, in witnesse of the syngler pleasure he felte in the breathe of her wordes, tolde her, that as her beautie and vertue deserved honor of the greateste prince in Spaine; so, for his parte, he onely mighte glorie in the service of the moste faire, courteyse, and honest ladie that ever was bredd on that syde the mountes. Wherewith he was driven to cutt of his further discourse, by the approche of the messenger whiche was sente from the two ladie mothers to will theym to comme to supper; where, yf there were any wante of curious devyse at dynner, it was supplyed with a double excesse at this supper, beynge served with suche chaunge and choice of straunge dyott, that, yf it be not syn to compare th' abuses mortal with divine misteries, I thinke Iupiter and the other goddes were not so plentifullie intreated uppon the mounte Peleon, celebratynge the mariage of the faire Thetis. Albeit the ende of the banquett concluded with a resolution to renewe th' exercise of after dynner, uppon a faire grene, environed with divers borders, and oderiferous hearbes, and ympes of the earthe, pavished above by artificiall sleyghte with certeine laurell

Mariage.

braunches and buddes of hathorne, to defende theym frome the parchynge heate of the sonne; where they hadde also, to assyste their pleasaunte recreations, the moste temperatt season of the daye at the declynyng of the sonne, the pleasante huishynge of a cleare streame discendynge frome the toppe of a mountayne, the chirpyn hermonye of the feelden birdes (assembled as it were onelye to increase their solace) and also the softe and swete accorde of the grene bowes or younge sprayes movinge at the whistle of the milde Zephir. Where, as they devided theym selves into diverse chaunge of pastimes; some to weave garlandes of flowers for their servantes, some to ronne and leape or expose their exploites of activitie for the honour of his mistres, and other to trye the maystery of mayne force by casting the sledge or heavie barr; so, amongest theym all, there was one Dom Roderyco, a neare neyghbour and moste famyliar to th'amarus Diego, who, perceiving by the secrett messengers of the eye whiche passed betwene hym and hys mistres by stelthe, to what sainte he woulde gladly offer his candell, and how desirous shee was to admitt hys devocion, furthered th'intentes of theym bothe so farfurthe that he toke by the hande a young gentlewoman, sittinge nexte to the faire Genivera, to begyn a newe daunce. Whereunto, as she was nothyng unwilling, so Dom Diego tooke corage also to addresse hym selfe to hys mistris, whose example the whole trowpe of nobilitie followed with indifferente contentacion. And, for the more honour of the daunce, Seigneur Roderico, who was the firste in the round, gave charge of scilence to the musicions, having conferred affore with his gentlewoman to synge some solemne note uppon the subjecte of the two amarus: wherein she performed so indifferently the praise and passion of theym bothe, that a man woulde have judged she hadd entred into the harte of Dom Diego, and bene specially instructed of the faire Genivera; who, seynge her selfe touched at the quicke, and pinched without laughinge in the hearinge of so manie, but chiefly exalted to the skyes in the presence of hym who tooke no lesse pleasure in her praises then if he hadd bene presented with the Seigneury of all Aragon—colde not so conninglie dissemble her contentemente but

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th' alteracion of her mynde appered in the often chaunge of complexion in her face; which, as it increased the cristal die and excellencie of her beautie, so Dom Diego, construyng that passion to his commoditie, gave judgement of th' assurance of her good wil; wherof, for a further prooff, he wrong her tender fyngers, and with a smylynge regarde, askynge her her opynion of the songe, wished that her servante mighte live to see th' accomplishment of such a prophesie; protesting, withal, that in his life he had not hard musicke of more delite. 'For the which,' (sayeth he), 'I acknowledge a dett to the gentlewoman that so aptly hath discovered your good will towardes me, and vowed so frankelie on your behalfe my loyall service, which I will not forgett to confirme in all that I maye, even untill the last dropp of my bloud.' Whereunto, Genivera replied with a doble usury of humble thankes; with requeste that he reapose undouted creditt in the mistery of the songe, whiche, as it had rightlye deciphered the determynation of her mynde, and unfolded that whyche she reserved onely as secrett in her selfe; so she wold not, for her part, forget to performe th' effect, when convenient time, with her mothers consente, wold admitt the lawful consummacion. Uppon which laste wordes, attende suche frendlie glaunces and wanton regardes of the eye, with a counterchaunge of semblable glee on his parte, that the two ladie widowes did not onely note their affections, but also give judgement of the conclucion and unitie of their myndes, with resolution (for their parts) to confirme the bargaine with th' assistance of time, using as then but only a simple conference, deferring the finall effect by reason of the tender yeares and grene youth of bothe the lovers, whome, if the discretion of the mothers at that instante hadd conjoyned by the othe of mariage, they hadd prevented the malice of an unconstant Fortune, who in all delayes forgettes not to playe the ordynary rolet of her natural mobility; wherof she exposed a manifest effecte in the persons of theis two auncient widdowes, one having lost her son for twenty or xxij moneths, (without hope eftesones to recover his presence) by a crueltie and rashe conceite of the doughter of the other, who (without

the speciall providence of God) hadd gyven suche a false bounde to her honour, that the simple remembrance was sufficient to dispatche the olde yeares of her mother, with an untymely sommonce to discende to her fatall grave.

And now, during this amarous practise betwene thyes two prentises in love, whose affection, growing to a ferventnes with an indifferent desier in theim both, presented argumentes of equall alteration in the personnes of the one and the other; for Dom Diego, retiring by litle and litle from the lively hew of his former complexion seamed transformed in a moment, neither did he allow any pleasure but that which he possessed by the presence of his Genivera; who also for her part judged the whole felicitie of the earth to consiste in the parson of her servant, whom she accompted the only patterne for perfection of all the gentlemen of his time. Neither did he let slip any weke wherein he wente not to do his dutie to his mistres three or foure times; in whom he founde a reatorne of his curtesie, with such vertuouse and honest consideration as was convenient in a maide carefull of the garde of her honor. Wherein, albeit her mother, reaposyng indifferent credit in the vertue of theym both, gave leave to her doughter to kepe hym companie; yet (as Aristotle affirmeth) honesty doth not broke longe dalliance, or wanton chatt, in chast maydes with the first that accoasteth theim with conference in corners, with any but suche as by consente of the church have gott the power and possession of their bodie, and is, or oughte to be, the one halfe or moytie of their mynde: whiche albeit was th' intente and desier of theis two lovers, yet the simplicitie of their frendes, deferring th' effect, wrought not only a breach of the bargain, but also sturred up in her an humor of mortal spite against the sinceritie of her loyal servant, who endewred the revenge of her unjust anger, under a punishment of a most sharp and long penance in desertes inhabitable and unknowen. For in the heate of this reciprocal love betwene thies younglings, it chaunced that a merveilous faire and goodly gentlewoman, doughter of a greate lorde of the countrey, called Forrando de la Sara, usyng familiarly the companie of Genivera, becam

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by that meanes extremely in love with Dom Diego, assayinge, by publike and private meanes, to imparte unto hym what power and authoritye she woulde willingly give hym over her harte, yf for his part he would requite the sinceritie of her love with semblable honor and affection. Wherein, experiencynge the benefytt of all honest meanes seamyng any waye to favour the effecte of her desyer, considered at last, that, above all other exercises, the knighte tooke greatest pleasure in hawkes. Wherefore, under coulor to make a breache into his favour with assistyng the disposition of his delite, she sente him one daye a tassell gentle, as the chiefeste jewell she had to presente hym withal, excepte the offer of her owne good wyl. Wherein Dom Diego, albeit he was wholly possessed by an other, and with the losse of his libertie hadd also so departed wit his judgement that he could not discerne th' intente and honest zeale of the gentlewoman, yet he accepted her presente, and retorned the messenger with suche thankes as appertayned.

In the receiving of this hawke appeared absolute showes of the evill fortune of the pore Diego, which immediatly fayled not to thonder uppon hym without compassion; for, as he went often to visitt his mystres, so he forgatt not continually to cary this hawke uppon his fiste, boastinge so farr uppon the goodnes of the birde, that he chaunced in her presence to saye that it was one of the thinges in the worlde he held most deare.

Sewerly this wordes were sifted more nerely then there was cause, and construed to other end then he mente them; seinge that certeine dayes after, in his absence, devising uppon his sondry vertues, some commended his honeste and curteus behavior, some gave praise to his valyantnes and dexteritie in armes, some exalted in him the sondrye giftes of nature, and, passing further, he was generally preferred of all the companie for his sinceritie and constant dealynge in matters of love; saving of one Graciano, who, rather envyinge the vertue of the knight by malice then hable to deface the leaste of his giftes by reason, joyned with the reste in commendacion of his personage, activitie, and other dowries of nature; 'but for his faith, or care of promiss

where loyaltye shoulde moste appere, I accompte hym (sayeth he) so apte to dissemble and inconstante by nature, that he useth no difference of personnes in grounding his affections, makynge no conscience to seame to languishe mortallye where he meaneth nothing lesse then firme constancie.' Which touched Genivera so neare that she coulde not give place any longer to the sinister bable of Graciano, desieringe hym to use other tearmes touchinge the honestie of Dom Diego: 'for' (saith she) 'I am of opinion that he will rather passe under the sentence of any death then forfeyt the leaste pointe of his promise passed alreddie under the seale of his faith to a gentlewoman of this countrey: besides his love (I knowe) is so sincere and upright that I dare pawne my lif on the behalf of th'assurance.' 'There is the miste that dimmeth your eyes,' sayeth this cankarde ennemye of Diego, 'for, under the vaile of a perjured loyaltie, he abuseth the simplicitie of honeste ladyes: whereof I nede not go farr for a prooff, nor you doubt much of the misterye, if you conferr the circumstance of his former profession towardes you with the presente league of frendeshipp betwene him and the doughter of Dom Ferrando de la Sara, confirmed alredye by the gyfte of a tassell gentle, which, for her sake, he estemeth above all the thinges in the worlde.' Which last allegation, restoring a remembrance of the words pronounced not longe ago by the knight touching the deare accompte he made of his hawke, began to brede a suspicion of his constancie, and an assured creditt in the information of th'unhappie Graciano: wherein, swelling immediatly with her unjust collor, incensed by a simple and cold jelowsie, was forced to abandon the place and retire into her chamber; wher she gave such skoape to her synister conceite that she was upon tearmes manye times to use force againste her selfe: whereunto she had added present dispatche, if a hope to procure in time the revenge of the wronge whiche she perswaded to have received of her Diego had not staide th'execution. Albeit she coulde not so governe her malicious disposition, but the deadly hate conceived in this moment against th'innocente gentleman did not onely supplante both stocke and roote of aunciente zeale

Genivera falleth in disdain with Diego.

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on her parte, but also grewe to suche mortalitie in her venemous stomake, that she seamed not to delite so muche in the use of her owne life as in desyer to take pleasure in the remembrance of the death of hym, who, no lesse innocent in the cause then ignorante of the grudge, came the nexte mornynge (as he was wonte) to see her, having uppon his fiste (by evill fortune) the birde which bredd firste this mortall jelowsye. And as he satt devisyng with her mother, fyndinge a wante of th' accustomed companie of his mistres, he asked where she was. Whereunto he was aunswered by one of her women, that, assone as she sawe hym enter the house, she tooke her chamber. All whiche he dissimuled by his wisdom, imagininge the same to procede of some wanton fancie, or coye conceite, whereunto the most part of women are commonly incident, so that, when he sawe his time, he tooke leave of her mother and departed, meting by chaunce as he wente downe the steares of the hall one of the *chambrieres*, or gentlewomen, of Genivera, whom he requested to kisse the hande of his mistres on his behalfe: whiche she promised to performe, hopinge to do a thinge no lesse acceptable to her mistres then to gaine thankes of him on whose behalfe she presented the curtesie. Albeit, as it is to be thoughte that Genivera enjoyed litle quiet and lesse contentemente in this meane while, solicited, I can not tell by what desyer, to defye whollye the remembrance of Diego: wherein she was the rather forthered by an information that he bare still the tarssell of hys fyste: whyche she judged to be done onely in despite of her. So, when her woman offred to presente th' imbassage of the knighte, she fell into suche tearmes of frenzie that the simple brute or name of Dom Diego sturred up such hainous alterations within her, that to her former wroth was added a present wodnes; in suche sorte, that she seamed for the tyme to labor indifferently betwene th' extreme panges of death and use of longer lif. Albeit, restored at laste by the greate diligence of her woman, she coulde not so wholly dismisse her furie but she imparted the passion of her anger to her eyes; who, after they had some what eased her inwarde greefe by a nomber of dollorous teares, put her eftesones in the

possession of her former speache whiche she witnessed in theis exclamations:— DISCOURSE XIII

Genivera exclaimeth against Diego.

'Ah! traitor and disloyall knighte! unworthie every waye to participat with the breathe of the common ayre, and no lesse meritorious of the honor or bare title of knighthodde, hath the constant and honest love I have borne the deserved this unhoneste recompense? Is it a vertue to pretende loyaltye under a masqued vyserne of detestable deceite? If theis be the frutes of thy fayth, purifyed thorowe so many othes, what exspectation of assurance is there in the promisse of any man? Is it I that must fele the stynge of thy infection? What cause have I given the to imagin the spoile of mine honor, and imparte the praye to an other unworthie every waye of just comparison to me; yf not in lovynge the more then was convenient to thy inconstante and dissemblinge disposition, I have embased mine honor to advaunce thy renowme? Howe couldest thou without blushinge attempte the offer of my good will, having thy conscience poysened wyth so many spotes of abhominable traison? Howe dareste thow presente me the *baise les mains* by the mouth of a messenger, seinge thy whole bodye is alredie vowed to the servicc of an other? No! no! seinge God hath reveiled the unto me afore thy villanye put effecte to the ruine of mine honor, I doubte not only to defende me hereafter from the force of thy deceitfull charmes, but also sweare unto the by the eternall majestie of the higheste, that, albeit force makes me the treasores of thye wickednes, yet assure thy selfe from hensfurth at my handes of such favor as thou maist expect of the most mortall enemy thou hast in the world.' Wherwith, to give the laste farewel to the pore Diego, she writ immediatly certeine lynes and delivered theym sealed to her page, with commissyon that the nexte daye hee shoulde meete the knyghte on the waye commynge thether and delyver the letter, wyth instruction besydes, that, affore hee came to the house, hee shoulde reade the contentes and performe the effecte. Whereof the page (beinge made to the stringe) fayled not of any point: for the next daye hee met Dom Diego a quarter of a league frome the house, presentynge hym the letter wyth hys

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commission by mouth; who, kissinge the paper of his mistres in honor of her that sent it, opened the packet and founde that whych foloweth:—

Genivera reprocheth Diego by a letter.

'Albeit the contynuall complaynte of my greeffe ymportes no dispence of my dollor, yet, in exclayming against the wrong thou haste don me, I shall so desypher thy villanye that the whole world shall fynde cause, not onely to proclayme open shame uppon the, but also (by my misfortune) beware of th' infections of thy detestable traison. Whereunto if I have added more credit then ther was cause on thy side, the remembrance of that whyche is past (preferring a contynuall viewe of thy perjured trothe) is to defende mee hereafter from the offer of semblable perill. Neyther wyll I live hensfurthe in feare of future evyl, or stand in awe eftsones to be infected by the, for that I have not onely banished the remembraunce of Diego oute of every corner of my mynde, but also am of intente to performe such vengance and punishmente of my selfe, that if I fele any vaine, member, or other parte in me, bente never so little to favor the, or sewe for grace on thy behalfe, to use no lesse crueltie in tearinge the same from the reste then thy disloyaltie hath sturred up suche juste cause of unsemely tyranny in me. And for thy parte, (O perjured knight!) sith it is thy only trade to beate every bushe where thou thinkeste to bee eyther birde or neste, goo pitche thy nettes where thou are sewer of praye, and baite thy hookes with tearmes of deceite to entrapp her, whose late presente is of more force wyth the then the honeste and chaste love which vertue began in us both! For, seinge a birde hath made the more lighte then the winde that supportes her in the ayre, God forbid that Genivera eyther admit thy excuses or allowe thy justifycacion, and muche lesse wishe the other good, then to see the torne in peces wyth the moste extreme tormentes that ever martired any traitor: whych is the laste favor thou hast to hope for of me, who liveth not but to worke the spite above any enemye thou hast in the world. GENIVERA LA BLONDE.'

He had no soner redd these sorowfull newes but liftynge

hys eyes to heaven he called God to witnes of hys innocencye; who, onely beyng privye to th'ynteggretie of hys mind, colde also justefye hys loyall meanynge towardes her who unjustly abused the sincere vertue of hys immovable affection. And as he ment ther to prefer some discourse in hys purgacion, the page, who was not so amplie instructed of hys mistres as mortall enemye to Dom Diego, staide th'intente of his meaninge by the reaporte of that whyche he hadde in charge by mouth, saying that he colde do no greater pleasure to Genivera then to shon all places of her repaire; 'seing' (saith he) 'that as the frendshipp you have vowed to the doughter of the Lord Sero hath discovered your untroth towardes her, so she hath geven judgement agaynste your vertue, for fedyng two simple gentlewomen indifferently with the foode of one uncerteine hope.' Wherewith he departed, leavinge the knighte in lesse care thenne affore, for that, conferringe her grudge with the cause, he thought the small occasion, founded also upon an untrothe, wold in shorte tyme take awaye the force of her collor. Albeit hee colde not so whollie dismisse the remembrance of her displeasure, nor governe his owne passion, but, retorning to his castell above an ordynary pase, went to hys chamber, wher, pulling the poore hawke from the pearche, committed her presentlye to a thousande morsels, and cursing her that sent her, wyth his owne follie in receiving so vile a thinge (enchaunted as he thought by some furye or magicall charme), determyned ymediatly to presente hys mistres with the sacrafize of th'occasion of her unjust anger, with intente to performe no lesse of his owne bodie, if she wold not give place to her displeasure upon his honest purgacion: which, wyth the dead hawke, he sente by a trustie servante of hys, debated at large in a letter; wherein, after a nomber of juste reasons to confute her unjust objections, touchinge lightly her rashe judgement in givynge sentence of hys untrothe without hearinge hys justifycacion, he preferred certeine humble meanes for moderacion of her displeasure, oneless she reaposed felicitie to see hym consumed in the martirdom of a pyning life, or delited in the newes of hys present death; with other instructions which he gave the messenger,

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but chiefly to note the contenance of hys mistres, and make faithfull reaport of every pointe of her aunswere. Wherwith the messenger posteth to Genivera, to whom with al humylitie he presenteth the charge of his commission. Albeit the passion of her fretting anger denied her pacience to reade the letter, and muche lesse wold give her leave to accept the present, th' unfayned witnes of the contrarie of that whych she so lightly beleved, but charged the messenger uppon great paine to retorne with the tromperies he hadde brought, and say unto his maister, that she knew to well his whistle to come at his call, and, being lately burned, she wold take heede eftsones to fall into the fyer. Wherwyth albeit the servant went abowte to prefer th' excuse of hys mayster, yet the disdaynefull lady, chokinge hys honest intente, forced him to unwilling scilence, with charge to ympart her resolucion to hys mayster; 'whom' (sayeth she) 'if I loved earst entyerlye, I hate nowe wyth a malyce more thenne mortal.' Wherwyth shee flonge out of the presence of the messenger, leavynge hym no lesse amazed at her crueltie then dowtefull to retorne to hys infortunate mayster, whom he knewe wold skarcely be kept from the daunger of dispaire in hearinge the sorowfull sommonce of his mistres. Albeit, seinge he had professed to make a faythfull reaporte, hee retorned, not forgetting to repete every point of that whyche she had given hym in charge; and withall restored the letter and deade presente unto the selly Diego, who at the same instant had given lyke ende to his evill and lyfe, if hys man had not withstanded th' execucion of hys morderinge handes. Albeit hee colde not give suche ympedymente to the furye of hys passion, but that it kepte hym occupyed wythe hideus groanes and dolefull regardes the moste parte of the after none, till at laste hee quallifyed th' extremetye of thys furye in complaynynge to hym selfe in thys sorte:—'Alas' (saythe hee) 'what judgement of fortune is thys, that beinge at the pointe to reape the frutes of the contentemente I wishe in the worlde, and fede of the only felicytie I have in this life, to be presented with an extremitie of more desperation then ever happened to any that bear the name of infortunat? If such iniquitie beare a

The complaint of Diego.

swaighe in payinge the due hier of the honest service of men, what hope hereafter may sustaine the lyfe of faythfull lovers? What exspectacion have they in the ende of their travaile, when a jelous envye hath power not only to take the praie oute of their handes, but also ympart the frute of their hope to an other not worthye any waye to participate with so glorious a merit? Ah! Genivera, if thy disdaynefull anger woulde give the leave to make a viewe of my innocencie, consider indifferentely the circumstance of my former love, with ymagynacion what assurance I have hereafter vowed on thy behalfe, so long as my body beares lif in this earthly corruption, I know thou woldest repeale the sentence of thy former judgement, correcte the sinister instincte that sturred upp the humor of thy crueltie, and wype awaye at laste the teares of my undeserved sorowe wyth a franke offer of that whyche I have deserved by justice. DISCOURSE XIII

'Ah! vaine hope! whyche hetherto haste flattered me wyth pilles of joyfull disgestion, leaving me in the ende to the mercye of a miserable dispaire! Is it I that muste fele th' operacion of thy poyson and liccour of bitter taste? It hadde bene better for me to have bene repulsed in the begynninge, then, after a pleasaunt profe of reciprocall love, to be refused and lose the earnest of my desyer for so small an occasion that the only remembraunce makes me blushe at the symplicitye of the cause. Albeit, fortune shal not altogether tryumphe over me; for so longe as I live, so longe wyll I kepe my vowe to the faire Genivera, and preserve my life onlye to witnes the constante force of my love: which, albeit I can not performe with out an extreme torment in skorchinge flames of contynuall passion, yet the remembrance of my dutie to her to whom I offer this devocion of a burninge sacrafyce of my selfe, wyll quallefye in some parte the heate of my skaldynge greeffe.' Wherewith, he retired into suche sighes and signes of lamentable dollor, showinge hym indifferently plunged betwene the alarams of death and panges of frenzie, that hys man was at pointe to ronn for the old lady, to come and blisse her son wyth her last farewell. Albeit, restoring hys traunce by his owne diligence began (so far as he durst) to reprehend the weaknes of hys

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mynde, for that he seamed so careles of hym selfe as to offer his life at the sommonce of a folyshe girle; 'who' (sayth he) 'useth thys cruell pollecie, peradventure, to make a tryall of your constancie; neyther ought you to do such wronge to your vertue, and much lesse kepe war wyth extremities; but if you be resolved to love her, you must also determyn to pursewe her by other meanes, and givinge a lytle place to the malice of Fortune attende the benefit of a better tyme, who is never unthankfull to theym that suffer her with pacience, and who also hath power to mollefye for you thys *Dyamantyn* harte of your mistres, albeit it be tempred wyth the mettell and bloud of the most furious and savage beastes that ever bredd in the desertes of Lybya.' Dom Diego did not only allow th'admonicion of this man, but also felte cause of comforte in his advise, with intente to persiste in pursewte of the good will of his mistres, to whom he preferred sondrie letters, ambassages by mouthe, and other excuses, wherin he gayned as muche as in the firste; for that the more he courted her with honeste importunityes, the greater grewe her unjuste displeasure, in suche sorte, that in the end she threatned the messenger with severe punishment if he continued anye longer the queste of his maisters follye: 'for' (saith she) 'theis handes shall rather give ende to my life by a willyng force againste my selfe, then my harte consente to be thankefull in anye sorte to hym, whome I hate no less ethen the stinge of a venemous serpente.' Which, as it brought a freshe supplie of dollor to the languishynge Diego, tryeng to th'uttermost the vertue of his patience, so, consideringe the litle gaine he sholde gett in attendinge that whiche his destynies hadd determined againste hym, and seinge withall he was voyde of power to withdrawe his affection, determined his reapose in the laste refuge of all miserable creatures, I meane to give end to his sorowes by death. Wherein, abhorringe notwithstandynge to defyle his owne handes with the bloude of hym selfe, he resolved to attende his fatall dome in performyng the reste of his pynynge dayes in some deserte, or solitary soile, not inhabited but by the savage societie of wilde beastes. Whereunto he added suche expedicion, that the nexte daye he caused to be made

Death the last and best repose of miserye.

secretly two habittes or attires of pilgrims for him selfe, and one man which he ment to take wyth hym, with other necessaries mete to furnishe suche a voyage. The same night also he writ at large to his cruell Genivera, deliveryng the letter sealed in moste sewer manner to one of his officers; to whome he woulde not imparte the mistery but, coloringe his pilgryms voyage with a jorney he said he hadd to make to one of his frendes, willed hym to communicate no lesse to his mother, and that within twentye dayes they sholde exspecte his retorne. 'For the reste,' sayeth he, 'I enjoyne the uppon the dutie thou owest me to deliver this letter the fourthe daye after my departure to the Lady Genivera *la blonde*, who, if she seame disdainefull, marke onely with what countenance she refuseth it.' Wherwith he dismissed hym and called the other, whiche, as you have harde, performed alwayes the message betwene hym and his mistres, whom onely he made privie to his devise and partaker of hys cruell intente; which seamed so straung in th'opinion of his man, that, what for the fowlenes of the facte, and speciall care he had of the wel doinge of his maister, he declared frankely his advise in this sorte:—'Ys it not sufficient, sir' (saieth he), 'that you give your selfe in praye to the crueltie of your mistres, but also to increase her glorie in sufferynge her crueltie to vanquishe your vertue? Are you so ignorant in the malice of women, that you can not discerne the delite they take to passion their poore servantes, triumphing chiefly in the dispaire of such as they have unhappely made thrall to their beauty? You oughte to eschewe the miserie of that inconvenience by th'autoritie of the wisemen in olde tyme, who founde suche juste cause of hate agaynste that secte that they dowted not to tearme theym the common ruyne of men. Wherin what other thinge moved the Greke poet to pronounce his opinion in few wordes uppon the state of women, but that he knewe the felicitie of man to be greater in shoninge th'acquaintance of that furie then in embrasynge the society of so perentory an evill; 'seinge' (saieth he) 'they differ nothinge in disposicion from the serpente, who, beyng deliverd from the violence of the frost, and preserved from presente perill of

His man dissuadeth hym from the pilgrims voiage.

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deathe by the husband man, dyd yelde him for recompence a mortal terror with his venemous hissing, and infected his whole house with a stinking vapour? Oh! how happy is he that is the maister of his affections, and enjoyenge the benefit of a pleasante libertie, hath the gifte to shon this sweete evill, which, so farre as I see, is the cause of your presente dispaire! Besydes (sir) why shoulde not you make an assaye to vanquishe thies suggestions of vanitie; seynge that, as he that can maister hym self, maye easely make hym lorde over manye thinges, so, as the orator affirmeth, the moste perfecte victorye is to make a conquest of our selves? Why should you determin so greate an enterprise with th' assistance of so slender advise, seyng that uppon rashe resolucions attendes ordinarie rebukes, and he that performes his affaires in hast, repentes comonly at leasure; neyther doth that expedicion showe good successe whose ende is not conferred with the begynnyng and guyded wholly by the governement of reason and vertue? For as uppon vertuouse entrerprises attendes a fame of honour and renowme, so the rewarde of wicked devises is infamye and sometyme shamefull death. And for your parte (sir) lett your auncient wisdome encounter this femenyne misfortune, in making as litle accompte of your rebell mistres, as she is moste unworthie to enjoye the leaste favor of your nobilitie, whyche deserveth a more honeste consideration then a farewell of such tyranouse disposition.' Wherewith beholdyng some argumentes of anger in the face of his maister, whom he feared to incense to th' uttermoste, he knitt up with this resolution:—'Seyng' (sayeth he) 'you are determined in your mishap, I besech you accept my service to accompanie your fatall guide, to th' ende I maye participate with you in your fortune, till the heavens, ceassing to wreake their mallice uppon you, do seame also contented to dysmisse the crueltie of your destynies.' Wherein, as he performed the some of his maisters exspectacion—who desiered only the companie of his man in the voyage of hys miserye—so, after certeine thankes for his good will, he tolde hym that al their furniture was ready, and that there rested nothinge but to departe, whyche they agreed to performe in the firste hower

The most perfect victorie is to make a conquest of our selves.

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after midnighte. Whereunto also th'execution followed accordynglie; for, betwene xii and one of the clocke in the nighte, our amarus hermitt, with hys man, stealeth secretly oute of his castell, takyng the fyrste pathe whiche his fortune did appointe hym, guided only by the lighte of the moone, without interruption or noyse of other creatures then the chirpinge brute of the lytle crickettes, solacynge theim selves in their kynde within the crevises of the earth. And wandringe thus by unknowen wayes the later remeinder of the fearefull nighte, he sawe appeare, in the discovery of the mornynge, when Aurora avaunced her flagge of white and redde, the mornynge starr, whiche some poetes call the candle that lightes the goddesse of love from the bedd of her secrett lover. When lo! the solace of the mornyng, resemblinge his auncient delite when he enjoyed the presence of his mystres, presented a fresh allaram of sorowe, in recording eftsones his unhappie chaunge of state. 'Wherein alas!' (saith he) 'have I deserved this plage, that denieth me participacion in the pleasure and contentement of others, who, after they have slepte the course of the nighte uppon the pleasante thoughte of their delite, do awake wyth the heavenlye harmonye and charme of lytle birdes, with assurance to enjoye th'effect of that whiche a shadowe or delitefull vision of the sprite presented theym in the night, sleping in so greate contentemente; where I (unhappie that I am) moste cruelly attended uppon with a contrarye destenie, and in place to enjoye a simple benefytt or priviledge of that whyche all other have in common, am forced to wander when all creatures are admitted to reste, having only th'aire of deserts and lawnes uninhabitable to recorde th'ecco of my sorowes, and the feloweship of wilde bestes to assiste the tunes of my complaintes? Ah! Venus! whose starre heretofore hath onely guyded me, and whose beames, of longe, have taken roote in my harte! What cause have I to complaine of thy injustice, whiche yeldes me falshood for faith and tormente for true constancie of mynde? If this be the hier of loyaltie, why beareste thou the tytle of juste? The pennance I endure dischargeth the of the name of mercifull, or if thou deale so severly wyth thy true

Diego begin-neth his pilgrymage.

Diego com-plaineth his chaunge of estate upon the waye.

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servantes, why kepest thou the course amongest the orient planettes of the heaven? Albeit yf I abuse thy honor in blasphemyng the majestie of thy godheade, I sewe for no favor, seinge I fele alredye the ful weighte of thy heavye hande; neyther haste thou any punishement in store wherof I taste not the force in this my unworthie affliction; whiche, seinge it procedes by th'influence of the starr whiche governeth me, dispatche at once the messenger of thy determinacion, to th'ende that, by my death, my distresse may receive ende, and my cruell mistres performe her glorious triumphe in the victorye of my pynynge lyfe.' His complaints coulde not so staye the swifte course of tyme, but, or he was ware, the heighte of the son showed the declyning of the daye; whiche moved hym to increase his pase, leaving the common wayes to folowe the pathes leaste acquainted with traveile. Wherein they continued withoute intermission till the cloasinge of the evenyng, when the wearynes of their horsses forced theim to discend and take harbor within a litle village, farr from the ordinary waye; from whence, after some litle releeff to their horsses, and lesse reste to theim selves, they departed, wandringe in that sorte by the space of three or foure dayes and nightes; th'ende whereof broughte theim at laste to the foote of a large mountaine, inhabited onely with savage beastes and creatures unreasonable, discoveringe rounde about a platt or soile of pleasante prospecte and moste proper to shroode the solitarie life of the wandrynge knyghte: for if he delited in the shade, he hadd there the benefytt of a nomber of pleasante trees whiche nature seamed to lende hym as a speciall solace in that wyldernes; when his sorowe desyered the use of a more open prospecte, the plaine forrestes and chases, wyth theyr wholle heardes of deare of all sortes, offred to give hym skoape to recorde his greeffe; and, for chaunge of recreation, he mighte viewe there the hideus and highe rockes, whose steepnes and craggie scituation albeit moved a terrour to the beholders, yet were they not without cause of greate delite, by reason of the pleasant grene, garnished with the tappisery of diverse flowers, spreadyng theim selves all alonge the heighte of the sayde mountes. But that whiche moved

moste his affection to that place was a merveilous faire and rowmey cave, environed on all sides with beeche, cypres, pyneaple, and ceder trees, wyth other braunches yeldynge frutes of diverse kyndes; righte afore the mouth or openyng of the which, tendyng to the valley, appered a nomber of pleasante graftes, whose rootes, receiving moisture by a cleare streame passing wyth softe noyse all alonge the dore of the cave, gave suche bountifull norriture to the twigges and tender braunches, that th' only topps bowed downe and dipped theim selves as uppon dutie in a fountaine of wonderfull clearenes, fedyng continuallye the saide streame: all whiche seamed to offer suche solace to the solytarye intente of Diego, that, without further advise, he determined to performe there the penance he wente to doo, and to converte that house builded by nature to the monasterye of his profession; wherein he mente to ende the voyage of his devocions, commandyng his man to alight, who, unsadlinge their horses, gave theim the keye of the wilde forestes, whereof hetherto they harde no newes.

Touchinge their saddells, with the harnesse and other furniture of their horsses, they bestowed within a litle cell or corner in their cave, where, also, leaving their ordinarye apparell, they putt on their habittes of pilgrim. There his man made provision accordynge to the condicion of their state and necessitye of the place, dyggynge, for his firste indevor certeine soddes and lomppes of claye, wherwith he entrenched and rampierd their felden shopp, to defende theym againste the furye of wilde beastes, who other wayes myghte oppresse theym in the nyghte. He made, also, twoo beddes, or lytle couches, of softe mosse, wyth a testure and sides of wodde, which he hewde in no lesse fyne proporcion then yf the skill of the carpenter had assisted the worke. They hadd no other releeffe or foode, for longe tyme, then of the frute whiche the wilde trees did yelde theym; onelesse sometime, for a chaunge of dyot, they were gladde to feede of rawe rootes, whiche they digged out of th' intrailles of the earth, untill extreme hunger preferred a meane to supplie their thinne fare—whiche was that his man made a crosbowe, with the whiche they killed often times the hare

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and conie fedynge at releeff. Some time they beguiled the wilde goate in the mountaines, and were often the bane of a greater beaste in the foreste, whose blood they pressed betwene twoo peces of woode, made for the nonst, devidynge theim into morsells, whiche they rosted with the heatte of the son, and so furnished in sober manner their leane table, disgestynge theyr rude and unholsome dyott wyth a cuppe of colde water, whereof they had no lesse plentye, with no more charges, then when they commaunded over whole cellars of delicate wyne in the pallayes of Dom Diego; who increased the dweile of his presente miserye wyth teares of continuall complainte, inveighinge againste the malice of his fortune. Wherein he used as a common exercise to walke all alone in the moste daungerous places of the desertes, enterteynynge his solytarye thoughtes, or rather of intente to offer hym selfe a praye to the jawes of some lyon, or tygre, or merciles beare discendynge from the mountaines. But the servante, dowbtynge the resolucion of his maister, prevented th' effecte of desperation wyth his contynuall presence, exclaymynge (as farr as he durste) againste suche vanities and actes of frennezie: wherein, if by chaunce he lett escape anye worde reprehendynge the crueltye or wronge don unto hym by his mystres, yt was a pastyme to see the alteration of Diego, storminge againste the presumtuouse audacitye in hys man, in suche sorte, as continuinge eftesones to accuse her discourtesie, he wolde not stike to threaten hym so farre, that, if it were not for the respecte of the loyaltie he hadd heretofore founde in hym, he woulde make hym fele how neare it tooched hym at the harte to heare with patience any blasphemy against her, who hadd no lesse righte to punishe hym in thys sorte, then he reason to endure the penance for her sake without cause of juste complaint agaynste her severitie. Wherein as he showed an undowted experience of the contagius dispocision of love; for that suche as be infected with the corruption of that ayre, take no pleasure but to gull and glutt their thirste with the brothe of that pestiferous poyson; so if he had ryghtlie measured his owne meritt with the cause of his unjuste torment, usynge with all th' advise of reason, he hadde not seamed so symple in

his owne blyndnes nor bene so sowne abused by the foly of a folish girle. His man, dowting any further t' attempt hym with perswacions, for feare to procure th' uttermost of hys displeasure, was forced to an unwillinge patience, grevinge, notwithstandynge, on the behalfe of the misfortune of his maister, who with his evill dyott and worse lodgyng, quarrelyng both two with his former order of bringing up, was become so pale and hideuse of regarde, that he rather resembled the dryed barke of a withered tree then the shapp of a man bearynge lyfe. Besides the course of continual teares, and skorchyng sighes derived from the bottome of his stomake, had so drained the conduites and vaynes, fedyng the partes of his bodie with natural moisture, that his eies sonke into his heade, his bearde forked and growen oute of order, the heares of his headd starynge lyke a forlorne man or one loathinge the use of longer lyf, hys skyn and face ful of forrowes and wrinkelles, procedyng of fretting thought, argued him rather a wilde man, borne and bredde upp al the dayes of hys lyfe in the wildernes, then the valyante Diego whose fame exceded earste the whole compasse and circuit of Spaine.

But here lett us leave our amarus hermitt, ful of passions, in hys symple cloyster or cave under the earth, and see what followed the delivery of his letters to his cruell Genivera; to whom the servante, the fourthe daye after his departure, accordyng to his charge, presented the letters not without a greate showe of dutie and reverence; who, notwithstanding, assone as she perceived by the direction from whence they cam forgatt not to retire into her auncient disdaine, and casting (in greate anger) the letters uppon the ground vouche safed not once to give leave to the messenger to declare the reste of his embassage. Wherwith her mother, some what reprehendyng th' incivilitie of her doughter, demaunded to see the packett; 'for' (saieth she) 'I am perswaded of th' onestie of Diego, neyther do I doute any deceyte in his vertue: nor you (doughter), for your parte, oughte to seame so curious to tooche theym, seynge that yf they ymporte anye poyson, your beautie only is to be blamed, whiche was the firste baite that infected the

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knighte. And if he putt you in remembraunce of your rigour, I see no wronge he doth you, considering the greatnes of his deserte and the slender care you have of his due consideration.' In whyche meane tyme a page tooke upp the letters and gave theym to th' olde ladie, who founde his complaynte in suche or semblable tearmes:—

The contentes of Diego's letter to Genivera.

'Seynge' (good madam) 'myne innocencie is denyed to worke th' effecte of her vertue, and juste excuses confirmed with th' autoritie of equitie and reason are altogether voyde of force to make a breach into your harte—so hardned against me with unjuste disdaine that the simple remembrance of my name is no lesse hatefull to you then the offer of any tormente what tiranny so ever it ymporte—I fynd the nexte acceptable service I can do you is (in mortefying whollye the cause of your displeasure and with my punishement to yelde you contentemente) to putt suche distance betwene us, that neyther you nor any other shall knowe the place of myne abode, and muche lesse the pitte of fattal repose wherein I entende to cowche my corrupte bones. Wherein, albeit, my contynuall passion, procedyng of the viewe of your discourtesie, hath bredd suche a generall debilitie thorowe all the vaynes and places of force with in me, that I feele my selfe alredye fallen into the handes of the dreadefull messenger, so, affore th' effecte or execution of the extreme hower, I am thus bolde hereby (with the true toochestone or witnes of myne innocencie) to putt you in remembrance of your unnaturall rigor. Not for that I meane to accuse you to the hier of your deserte, but that the worlde (beynge privie to my case) maie be th' indifferente judge betwene my integrity and your crueltie, my loyall affection, and the wronge you do to the rewarde of my service; assurynge my selfe, notwythstandinge, that the reaporte of my deathe will bringe a remorse to your conscience, with a compassion (albeit to late), seynge the same shalbe th' equal ballance to paise my sincere and constante intente with your credulous and rashe judgement, in admittinge for trothe the false suggestion of suche as envyed the vertue of our honeste love, with a suborned informacion of

Deathe the dreadefull messenger.

a frendeshypp betwene me and the doughter of the Lorde Sera. Yf you will make it (good madam) unlawful for a gentleman, traded in the disciplines of civilitie, to receive the presentes of a ladye or gentlewoman equall in degree or honor to hym self, wherein will you to consiste the pointes of humanitie? Howe can we glorie or seeme meritorious of the title of nobilitie, yf it be an offence to be thankefull to suche as do homage to our honour with th' offer of anye courtesie? Wherein, notwithstandynge, I was so curious to offende you, that th' only respecte or feare of your displeasure, forcinge me to abuse the goodnes of myne owne inclination, made me retorne the offer of her frendeshypp with a simple *Gram mercy*. DISCOURSE XIII

'And, for your parte, if your hate hathe taken suche roote againste me, and your self so resolved to do wronge to the sacred pitie exspected in al women, and shrowded comonly under the vaile of suche beautie as nature hathe paynted in your face, that neyther the sacrefice whiche I have made of The hawke. the cause of your unjuste disdaine, my languishing penance, nor lawful excuses, have power to perswade you to the contrary of your synyster ymagynation, I see no other choyce then to yelde to the partiall sentence of your judgemente, whyche, as an enemye to th' equitie of my cause, favoreth wholly the injustice of your conceite. Wherein, seynge the spottes of your mortall displeasure can not be wiped awaie but by the blodd of my lyfe, whiche also I am yet to performe, so longe as my sowle dothe kepe her holde by the mortall thred and fraile fillet of my bodie, fyndinge this one thynge to increase the miserye of my death (passinge as the breath of a pleasant sighe whych shall have power to dysmiss my soule under the sommonce of a softe and shorte pange) that myne ynnocencye wil alwaies lyve to accuse you as a cruel mordresse of your moste constante and loyall servant,

DOM DIEGO.'

The tragicall contentes of this letter strick such soddaine dollor into the mynd of th' old lady that she seamed to participate with th' affliction of the pore forrestian hermit. Albeit, dissimuling her passion affore her howshold ser-

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vantes, retired into her chamber with her doughter only, whom she failed not to rebuke in sharp sorte for her folish cruelty, as the only cause of the losse of so worthy a knyghte as Seigneur Diego; whose letter, albeit she deciphered unto her worde by word, proferring with al sondry ymportunities for mediacion and grace on his behalfe, yet seamed she as weake to move the harde harte of her doughter, as the myld Zephir, breathyng from the western shore, is hable to shake the monstrus rockes, builded in the belly of the sea, and muche lesse the passion of her fury, judginge his penance far inferior to the desert of his inconstancy. Wherwith the simple mother, rather complayning then correctynge the stubbornes of her doughter, dysmissed the messenger with only charge to salute on her behalfe his mistres her deare frende and neighbour; who, altogether ignorante of the contentes of the letter, rejoysed notwithstandyng that her son had written to Genivera, hopinge he had ymparted to her the day and hower of his retorne. Wherein, notwithstanding, she was no lesse frustrate then her assurance proved uncerteine, in such sort that the date of the twentye day expired, eye! ij or thre monethes fully performed, wythout any newes of her son, she began to enter into no lesse tearmes of dollor then if she had accompanied his corpes to his fatal tombe; exclayminge, wyth all, agaynste th'iniquitie of the heavens in blessing her with suche a posteritie, and then to take hym from her in the myddest of the prooffe of hys vertue. Wherin cryenge out agaynste the bewtie of Genivera (whych she judged the only cause of his absence) cursed also the mornyng wherin hee wente on huntinge, wishinge in th'ende that some revelacion wold disclose unto her the place of hys abode, to th'ende she myghte eyther reclaime hym in whom consisted the hope of her olde age and exspectacion of her whole house, or at leaste assiste in person such good or evill fortune as fell to his share.

If the mother complayned his desaster, her son (as it is to be thoughte) enjoyed small quiet and lesse contentmente of mynde; who, now become a citizen with the beastes and birdes of the forrestes, left neither roote of tree, height of rocke, nor sonnye syde of any greene hill, without some

signe or marke of his carefull state; wherein, usinge the pointe of a sharppe bodkyn as a supplie of a steeled chezell, he woulde some tyme engrave the successe of his love upon a harde and dryed tree. Sometyme a brode and thynne barke, taken from some younge and greene spraie, served hym in steade of paper or parchement; wherin he cyphered with such darke letters the name of hym selfe and hys mistres, drawen together wythin one intricate circle, that the best mathematical in Padue or Paris woulde demaunde respite to decipher the true enterpretacion. One day, amongest the rest, ravinge upon his thoughtes by the borde or brinke of the fountaine joyninge (as you have hard) to his desert cotage, hee emprinted these verses followinge uppon a faire stone whyche the streame of the river hadde caste uppon the shore:—

Oh! sacred sylvan Pan, and satirs of this vale,
And ye oh! woddie nymphes, who wepe in wretches plaint,
Staie here your gliding stepps, recorde my dolefull tale,
Judge you what I deserve, whom loyall love hath spent:
Assiste my dryed eyes, with freshe supply of teares,
Whose dropps of dule have draynd, eche synowe of his sapp,
Or els, by fatall voyce, cloase up my loathsom yeres,
Whose view, wyth longer lyfe, encreaseth my myshapp.

Not farre from thence, upon the heighte of a highe hil, where he made every day his morning walke at the risinge of the son, was a faire and square plat, yelding at all tymes of the yere a pleasante glee of grene flowers and other deckinges of the springe; in the middell wherof, whether it were by the devise of nature, or curius industrie of man, were foure pillors, supporting a massie marble, squared and hewen corner wyse accordynge to the forme of an alter, uppon the whyche he left this monument in letters of eternitie:—

Thou pillor sqare! on whom er this, the sacred fumes did frye,
Wyth incense to the blasing troane, and majestie on hye,
Devest the now of royall robes, let regall office passe,
And dewed wyth my teares of dule, my sacryfice embrase:
Discloase thy marble breste, and harbor here such plaint,
As neyther former tyme hath founde, nor future age shall tainte.
And sith disdaine in love hath forced this present want of breath,
Let heare appeare howe willingly, Diego proveth deathe.

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Rounde aboute the brym of the sayde stone he writte thys remembrance :—

Thoughe froward fate hath forcde my grefe,
And blacke dispaire this deadly paine,
Yet tyme I truste will bringe relefe,
When loyall fayth shall have her gaine.
Tyll then, the stormes of banisht state,
And pennance in this harmitte's cell,
Shall trie her cause of wrongfull hate,
Whose malice, lo ! kepes me in hell.

And upon the thyn and tender barke of a beeche shadinge th'entrye, or dore, of hys hermitage, moved belyke wyth some soddayne apprehencion of joye above hys custome, writte this devyse :—

I see thy glory shine, wyth gle of glisteringe showe,
And thou, for bewtie, stalde on hiest seate of state.
At laste, so shalt thou fynde, though now thou list not knowe,
That tyme thy plumes will plucke and age thy hew abate.
Then vaunt not so in gaine that withers with the weede,
But decke the garlande with such boddes as vertue blomes :
Els shalt thou reape, wyth shame, but cockle for thy seede,
When I, most sewer, shall have my hier from heavenly doms.

Whych beinge espied of hys man, who, as he alwayes kepte a diligente eye uppon hym, so dowtinge these fantasies might work th'effectes of greater extremities, asked to what ende served the lute which he broughte in his wallet if not to give hym solace sometyme in singinge the praises of her, on whose behalfe he did not only offende in supersticius homage, but also in committing fonde ydolatrie. 'Will you that I fetche it' (saithe hee) 'to th'ende that, withe Orpheus, you may sturr up the trees, rocks, and hollow valleyes, to bewaile your mishap, and witnes the pennance whyche you make, withoute ever committinge offence worthie of halfe so greate a punishmente?' Wherewith he put the lute into the hande of hys mayster; who, albeit reaposed equal delite in the tunes of musicke and teares of present miserye, yet, to confirme his solytarie state wyth a remembrance of hys auncient passion, he played certeine dollorus notes, not withoute a nomber of hollowe sighes and streames of sorowe distillinge like the droppes of raine down his face; which

was so disfigured that hardly cold he have ben descried by such as have alwayes bene his most famyliars.

This was the miserable state of this infortunate younge man, who was so whollye resolved to presente dispaire that he durste not admit the offer of better hope, and muche lesse ymagyn that whych nowe attendes to restore hym everye waye to hys entyer. Albeit, like as neyther the miseries or felicities of men be of perpetuytie, and every thinge hath hys proper tyme, so Fortune, disposed to compassion, and wearye at last of the sondrye wronges she had don to the penitencier of Genivera, lent hym a meane to clymbe the higheste staffe of her wheele. Wherein, certeinly, appered a speciall effecte of the providence of God, who only doth, and is hable, to prefer a facilitie in thinges that seame most harde and ympossible in the judgement of man. Like as, also, the meanes whereby he workes and makes the ministers of hys wil, are so secret and far from the knowledge of us wretches, that when we thinke utterly to loase any thyng, yet then our expectacion is deceived in reteyning that whych earst we yelded for lost; in such sorte, that as what favor soever Fortune dothe geve us, we are not hable to assure oure owne estates, so likewise oughte wee not to dispaire or defye oure selves for anye adversatie, how great soever it appeare, seing that God, exposing dayly effectes of mercy upon us, willeth us to reapose our hope and assurance in his goodnes; which, as he hath declared by manifolde examples in the person of our deare frendes, so our owne eyes have bene witnesses of the wonderfull merveiles he hath wroughte in like cases. For howe many have wee sene in our tyme, who, being in the power of their enemies, judged to dye, yea brought to the place wher the last and fatal blowe of execution shoulde be given, were not only taken, by great mervaile, out of the handes of such perills, but (for a more wonder and admiracion of the misteries of God) called to the state of a kingdom, with royal authoritie over a whole people: which, because it is necessary to justefye by som authoritie and auncient profe, I have thoughte good to ympart unto you in this digression that which I have noted out of the records of Plyny; an example, albeit not

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famylyar, yet of undoubted truth: for at such time as Ladislas son of King Anbart raigned in Hongarye and Boemya, being of tender yeres, and semblable experience for the direction of hys state, was constrayned to reapose all his creditte in th'opynions of his barones and lordes of advise; amongest whome, by occasion of civil sedicion, grewe a peculiar grudge betwen the children of the Lord John Unyades Wayvode (deceased not long affore, and in hys lyfe the only protector of the king and tutor of the multitude) and Henry earle of Celye, next cousing and parent to the kyng that then lived. This quarrell grew to such tearmes of revenge, that th'erle of Celye, beyng one daye in a churche in one of the chief cities of Hungarie, was mordered by the handes of the sayde Unyade: whych beyng brought ymediatly to the eares of the kynge, hee was advised to dyssymule hys juste wrathe, for that at such hower he was not of sufficiente power to gyve correction to so greate a presumption. Albeit, retiringe ymediatlye to Budo, th' ordynarye place of hys abode, and where hys greatest force remeyned, he seased upon bothe the children of Wayvode, and stryke of the heade of the th'eldeste, called Ladislas, deferring justice to the other, named Mathias, for the respecte of his younge yeres: albeit he inclosed hym in sewer prison within the kingdom of Boemia. Where, as he remayned without hope of longe life, or ende of his imprisonment but by death, so it chaunced, not longe after, that the Kynge Ladislas, comminge to do execution of th'infante of Wyvado, dyed in the same towne where he indured his miserable captivitie. Whereupon the Boemians chosed for their king one George Pogibracchio. The Hungariens, on the other side, advertised of the death of their soveraine, began to enter into compassion towardes the prisoner, and preferringe to memory the vertue of his father, at such time as he bare authoritie in their publike weale, they proclaimed Mathias King of Hongarie, who, beinge in the custodie and daunger of George, newly adopted Kyng of Boemya, was not only delyvered by hym, but also, he gave hym his doughter in mariag; by which meanes, of a pore desperat prisoner, he becam, in one instant, a puissant

kinge. Wherunto as he durste never before aspire by any hope or likelihod that appered, so, if it had not ben for his adversitie, he had never sit in the seate royal of Hungary; bothe for that they woulde have chosen an other; his elder brother Ladislas hadd bene afore hym; the countie whiche they slewe woulde have resisted suche preferment; but, chieflye, it is lyke the Hungariens would not hav given hym suche large title of dignitye, if it had not ben for the respecte of compassion they used uppon his miserable captivitie; who, as he came to the crowne (as you see) by the same meane which the other lost it, so the famous historiographer, Titus Livius makes mencion of the like accidente happeninge to Jacques de Lusivano, uncle to Petre, Kyng of Cypres, at the solemne feast of whose coronation the Jenevoys and Venetiens contended for superioritie, either of theim striving for the prefermente of the firste place in that assemblie; in the presence of whome, Jacques de Lusivano, partiall on the Venetiens side, caused certeine of the Jenevoyes to be executed: wherof the state of Jeyne being advertised, determined to take cruell vengance. Whereunto they added such expedicion, that, in a moment, they had levied a great armye under the conduction of Pierro Fregose, a most excellent captain by sea, who discarged the creditt of hys commission with so good fortune, that he toke the yle and put the citie to sacke, reservyng, notwithstandyng, the life of Jacques Lusyvano, whom he caried prisoner to Jeane, wher the senate enjoyned him to perpetual ymprisonment within the strongest tower of their citie: wherin, albeit, he cotinued (without hope of libertie, or exspectacion to enjoye any parte of his auncient dignitie) by the space of nyne yers, yet yt happened, in the ende of the said tearme, that Fortune, torning her wheele, gave saffe conduit to the Kyng Pierro to passe into th'other world without heire of hys body. By reason wherof th'inhabitantes of the yle, consideryng Seigneur Lusyvano was of the blodd royal and next parent to their dead lord, tooke such compassion of hys captivitie, with a remorce of his longe pennance, that, in consideration of his misery, procedynge by their occasion, they redemed his liberty with a great exaction of money,

Venice taken and put to sacke by Pirro Fregos.

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and annoynted hym Kinge of Cypres; which peradventure he hadd never possessed, yf the desolacion of his ymprisonement had not wroughte the meane—albeit he had enjoyed his libertie and pursewed it to th'uttermost. Such is the wonderfull providence of God, punishynge the wicked at his pleasure, and (restoring the misery of such as dispaire of worldly succour) exposeth effectes of his omnipotencie excedynge th'exspectacion and ymagynacion of the creatures of the earthe. Suche was, also, the case of Dom Diego; who, determined wholly to spende the remeynder of his lyfe in the studie of solytarie philosophie, upon the wilde and riche mountes Pireney, was relived and restored when he was leaste in opinion or hope of succour.

For, as you have harde, he had a neyghbour and deare frende, called Dom Roderico, who, above the rest, lamented chiefly th'absence and misfortune of Diego. It chaunced within twenty and two monethes after the pilgrim began his voyage, that this Roderico (havyng bene in Gascoyne to dispatche certeine necessary affaires there) in his retorne to Barcelonia—whether he had missed the path of his righte waye, or that the sprite of God (as it was moste lyke) guided hym—was, or he wyste, upon the caryre that ledd him directly to that place of the mountes where was th'ordinary residence of his great frende Diego; who grew so fast into declynation and debilitie of hys body, that if the clemency of the highest had not over shadowed him, he had wroughte the wretched effecte of that which he chiefly desiered, that is with the losse of life to give ende to his harde pennance.

Dom Roderico, wandring thus in the wildernes of the mountes, dispercing his traine to discover some places of habitacion, was advertised by one of his people, being within twelvescore yardes of the hermits cave, of a tracke and steppes of men, not without some merveile notwithstandyng, for that th'infertillety of the place showed no aboad nor repaire for civil people. Whereupon, as they debated, and were in devise to appoint one of the companie to follow the trace somwhat further, they sawe one enter the mouth of the cave, which was Dom Diego, who came from the top of the hill affore mencioned, wher he had newly performed his

morninge complaint, with his face directly toward the coste where he judged was th'oracle of the sainte to whom he dressed his devocions. The knight sente one of his valletts to approche the cave and know what they were that lived so solitarily, and withall to demaunde the highe waye to Barcelonia. But he, discoveringe afar the scituation of the hoale, so wel fortefied and rampierd with stones and blockes cowched in the forme of a trenche, fearing the same to be the receptacle, or forte, of some that kept house by the highe waye side, living of large revenue, durst neither come nere it nor aske the waye as he was commanded by his maister: to whom as he retorned with more fear of his shadow then true reaporte of that he had in charge, so the valiant knight, of more corage then his cowardly servant, put spurres to his horsse, gallopyng to the veraye dore of the cave, where he ceassed not to call and knocke, till he sawe comme owte a man so disfigured with leannes of his face, and other exterior deformotie of his bodye, that his veray regard moved compassion to Roderico; who, asking what he was, demaunded also the common waye to Barcelonia. This was the servant of Diego; who aunswered that he could yelde him no reason of the waye to Barcelonya, and lesse instructe him touchinge the costes of the countrey: 'for that' (saieth he) (not without some sighes and other doleful regardes) 'we are two pore brethern, whom the adventure of fortune hath brought hether to do pennance, and mortifie our present age for the synnes and offences of our youth passed.' Which wordes of two pore bretherne, broughte thether as strangers by the guide of Fortune, with the presente remembrance of Diego and his servante, argued such suspicion to Roderico that he alighted; not for that he thoughte to encounter him whom he was most desiered to embrase, but to see only the singularities of the rocke and the mistery of the closse castel, builded in the bellye of the earth. Where, finding him whom he serched (without knowing, notwithstandynge, what he was) entered into conference together of the difference betwen the felicitie of the solitary lif and miseries which they fynde that participate with the wretched follies of this worlde: 'for' (sayeth he) 'the mynde withdrawen

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from the viewe of worldly vanities takes his only pleasure in the contemplacion of heavenly thinges, being alwaies more apte to observe the commandements of God, with a sincere reverence to their maker, then those whiche haunte the common conversation of men. Wherin, truely (when all is said) continuall frequentacion one with an other, delites, ambicions, covetousnes, and superfluities of all vices whiche we finde in this confused amasse and corrupte worlde, do cause us to mistake our selves, forget our dutie towardes our Creator, fall into a perillous disdaine of pitie and charitie, and some time to diverte the sinceritie of the true religion, and abuse th' integritie and undoubted interpretation of the gospell: which I leave to be debated at large by the theologians, to whom such charge doth cheifly apperteine.' As the unknowen hermit and the knight Roderico were in theis devises, certeine of his servantes, visitinge every cell and celler of the cave, founde in the toppe of a vawlte, framed of certeine sparres of wodde rammed in the earthie wall at both endes, two saddells; the one wherof (seamynge to have served heretofore some faire Jenett) was covered with crimsyn velvett, fringed rounde abowte wyth silver throme, stodded with nailes of sondrie enameyle, and armed wyth plates of steile wroughte curiouslye uppon with certeine rayes and streames of pure golde; which (albeit, the rouste had defaced the steele) loste nothinge of his entyer and beautye. And as one of the companie offred to buye theym, seing neyther horsse nor moyle worthie to weare such furniture, the knight, having ended his discourse with the maister hermitt, sounded to horsse, with intent to leave the poore men in peace and searche some other meane to fynde out the high waye. Whereuppon, he that was desyerous to buy the saddells, presented theym to his maister; who, as he behelde theym, felte a seconde motion or remembrance of his frende Diego. Wherwith, searchinge the harneys and every pendell of the sadle, he founde this inscription written in in Spanishe uppon the crooper, '*Quebratare la fe, es cosa muy fea*': which is in Englishe, 'to breake thy faith is a detestable thinge.'

This devise restored cause of newe astonishmente, for

that it agreed wyth th' ordynary stampp whiche Dom Diego beare alwaies in his armour: which the rather confirmed him in opinion that without doubte the sadle apperteined to the one of the two pilgrims; whom, as he began to beholde with a more percinge regarde then afore, without discerninge in either of theim any signe or marke of knowledge, by reason of their hideus and disfigured hewe, so Dom Diego, seinge the diligence of his frende, with desier he hadd to discover him, began to labor of a passion of tremblinge feare, with such jelewse doubte of him selfe that the blodd moved in th' inner parts, and ascended (maugre his resistance) into the face and other places of discovery, bewrayed th' inward alteration of his minde; which, with the uncerteine regarde of his eyes, shewed to Roderico an absolute assurance of that which earst he durste not suspecte. And that whiche gave also credit to his conceite was a locke of his curled heare, whiche he kepte wrapte about his righte eare. Whereupon he dismissed all suspicion, and as one assured of his doubte, threwe his armes aboute the necke of his frende, wateryng his breste with the teares of his eyes, and saide unto him:—'Alas! Seigneur Diego, what disfavor of the heavens have kepte you so longe from the companie of those that dye of distresse in the absence of you whose presence was the piller of their consolation? What be they that have procured this longe eclipps of your name; when it oughte to expose the clearest light, both for the glorie of your present youth, and honor of your future old age? Ah! is it my companie that moves this longe scilence in you? Is it I that have deserved this wrong at your handes, to abuse the vertue of my honeste frendshipp with a shamefull feare to disclose your self unto me, and doom regardes without argument of gladnes? Do you thinke, alas! that I know not him whome I embrace? No! no! I can not be so simple, nor my judgement blinded any longer in the knowledge of him whom the secret instinct of my harte discovered at my first entrey into this cave; neither is there any part in me of judgment, that doubteth you to be the same Seigneur Diego, whose renowme resowndes th' uttermost confynes of Spaine: and God forbid that I depart

Roderico discovereth and embraceth his frende Dom Diego.

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here hens, without carieng with me the glorie of equal contentement to ij indifferently passioned in your absence, the one to my selfe, joyinge in my happie fortune, to drawe you out of the dongeon of this calamitye, the other in makinge so gladsome a present to your mother; impartinge also the joyful newes to your subjectes and servantes, whose eyes are not yet drie with the teares of your departure.'

Here Dom Diego, seing he could no longer dissemble that which was so plainly disclosed, and construing to the best the thankeful congratulacions of his frend, began to relente in his harte no lesse then the gladsom mother in recoveringe her childe that hath bene longe kepte from her, or the chaste wif, longe destitute of the presence of her deare husbande, reioyseth when she holdes him in her armes and may embrase him at pleasure. Wherin, being also indifferently passioned betwen delite and dollor, honest shame and semblable feare, passinge a declaration of his inwarde trouble of minde by the conduites of his eyes distilling streames of sorowe and joye by great aboundance, retourned th' imbrassements of his frende with no lesse hartie affection then the other with good will somoned this new acquaintance, sainge: 'Ah! howe secret is the determination of God and his judgementes inscrutable! I resolved here to attende the ende of my miserable dayes, without making my intente privie to any man in the worlde, and lo! nowe am I descried when I feared leaste my discoverie. I am trulye,' sayeth he, with a pitifull discharge of a nomber of dollorous sighes, 'the same infortunat Diego, and your deare frende, who (persecuted with continuall affliction and tormente of fortune) was so weary of the worlde that I chosed this deserte habitation as a secret receptacle, to performe the reste of the voyage which nature hath enjoyned me in this transitorie and wretched vale; where, seinge you have unhappely discovered me, I beseche you (by the honor of your name and vertue of that frendship contynued betene us from the beginning) let it suffice you that you have seen me, without procuring impedimente to the reste of my willing pennance, by imparting the place of my retreate to any.'

Diego acknowledgeth himselfe to Roderico.

Whereunto Roderico did not only refuse to condiscende,

but also, continuing his former earnest, perswaded him to discontinue that brutal lif, with admonicion that God had made theim noble and given theim authoritie, not with charge to live ydle, eyther in their pallaceis or other obscure place, but so to bestowe their tallente that with the example of their vertue, th' ignorant may be instructed in the trade of honest living, the good men supported in their integritie, and the bad sorte kepte in awe by their justice. 'And for your part' (saith he) 'how vainely may your subjectes and people rejoyse, in that God hath blessed theim with a lord to their contentacion, yf, afore th' experience of our vertue, they loase the cause of their contentement. What comfort or quiett, thynke you, can harbor within the carefull breste of your desolate mother, who hath made the worlde happy with so honest a son, bringinge you up with suche diligence that you lacke nothinge to make you parfect, and in this sorte to loase the frute and exspectacion of such norriture? It is you (sir) whom dutie commaunds to yeld obedience to your parentes, soccour to th' afflicted, and to do justice to suche as demaunde righte at your hande. Alas! it is your pore subjectes, who, lamenting your absence, complaines of the wrong you do to theym in denieing the use of your presence. It is you that overwhelmes th' olde yeares of your mother with untymely desolation. It is you that reneweth the course of her continuall complaintes, in breakyng your faith towching the day of your reatorne.'

Th' office of a noble man or one in authoritie.

Wherwith th' impatience of Dom Diego in hearynge th' objections of his own faltes, brake his furder discourse, excusyng him selfe in this sorte:—

'Yt is easie' (saieth he) 'for hym that is well to comforte the sicke, and harde for suche as be in distres, to admitt any councell in their evil. You finde a facilitie to give judgemente of my disease, beinge whollye ignorante of the cause; and accuse my absence rather by desier to do me good, then of any malice you owe to my wretched state; but if you understode the circunstance of my misfortune, and the occasion that first moved me to make trial of this solitary life, you wold converte (I doute not) this sinister conceite of the wronge which you charge me to do to all

Diego excuseth hys departure from his contrey.

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men to an oppinion of ryghte on my behalfe, seing the most wise and assured of al, assailed with the lyke tormente of sprite which I feele quarrelling with the constancye of my mynde, have lefte example of faltes of no lesse fragilitie, then myne, I confesse, is justely meritorious of reprehencion.' Wherewith, drawing Roderico aparte frome the reste, he preferred a particular discourse of his love, his possibilitie and good hope in the beginning, his sinister successe in th' end, withe the continuacion of the unjuste crueltye of his mistres; whose name he cold not pronounce without suche fluddes of teares and skorchynge sighes that for the tyme they staied the course of his wordes, movinge such compassion to the tender harte of Roderico, that he was forced to kepe him companie with semblable kindnes; assaing notwithstanding to remove the vaile of such desperat opinion, with requeste to discontinue his savage lyfe in the desolate forrestes. Wherein he prevailed as muche as if he had undertaken to perswade a multitude without a toung, for that the resolved hermit tolde hym that he wolde not only be tenant to the mountes so long as nature and he cold agree upon the bargain of lyfe, but also advowed unto hym, by othe, that (withoute the good will of his Genivera) he wolde never retorne to hys contrey, and (to avoyde further discovery) wold seke to shrowd hym selfe in a place more savage and lesse frequented then this. 'For' (saieth he) 'like as my retorne wold bryng but increase of passion, specially in being denied favor wher I have found a former repulse, I besech you, let it suffice that I fele the burden of one mishap, ceassing to allure me to the prooffe of a seconde affliction, worse I am sewer then my presente punishemente, wherunto I have added a contentement with an immovable patience.' Wherin his raisons seamed to include such indifferent justice and pitie, that Roderico cold not replie but with tearmes of compassion; with consente that he shoulde contynue his abode there yet ij monethes, in whych tyme, he sware unto hym (by the honor of knightehodd), that, for hys parte, he would not only make his peace with his cruell mistres, but also procure mutuall conference betwene theym; assuring hym, with all, that he should not

be discovered by hym nor any of hys trayne. Wherewith leavynge hym a feelde bedde, and ij menne, wyth money too furnishe hys wante, he tooke hys leave, with firme promisse to see hym againe in shorte tyme, with cause of more contentemente then at that presente he lefte hym full of annoye, and hym selfe no lesse disquieted for the trouble of his frende. Wherin God knoweth in what sorte he detested (by the wayes) the wilfull crueltie of Genivera, blasphemyng no lesse agaynste the whole secte, (paradventure) with some raison. For there is (I can not tel what) secret motions in the myndes of women, which have their howers and tymes as th' increasynge or dyminishynge of the moone. Whereof as it is veray harde (without great experience) to give any raison touchinge the cause, so we see it is such a principle or generalitie amongst theime to ymprinte so sewerly in their hartes this fraile or rather inconstante instinctes of mobilitie, that the wiseste and moste subtill that ever was, lacke skill to observe the seasons of this ymperfecte humor.

Dom Roderico by this was arryved at his house, wher he neither forgatt his owne promisse nor the necessitie of hys frende; for the nexte daye he wente to the lodgynge of Genivera, not to communicate with her as yett, and muche lesse to impart his fortunat encounter in his retorne out of Gascoyn, but rather to sounde by some secrett circumstance afarr of, the doinges and determination of the girle, and whether any other usurped the glorie of the victorie which of righte belonged to his frende Diego. Wherein he was so subtill in this drifte that he accoasted the page of the gentlewoman, in whose bosome was builded the only store house of her moste secret affaires; forgettinge therin the precepte of the wise, who willes us to commit no councell to suche as are weake of raison, and for wante of discretion do lacke the gifte of secretnes, whereby they are not hable to governe the libertye of their tounges. Suche was the simplicitie of this page, whose softe humor the knighte fed with such fine dyot that, by litle and litle, he drewe the worme quite from his nose, and was made so privie to the practis of Genivera that he understood, that, since her

The wise man will never comytt councelle to children.

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unjuste displeasure with Dom Diego, she hadd vowed her good wil to a Biskaine, as then the steward of her mother's house, a gentleman veray pore, but for the rest of sufficient perfection; and that he was now in the contrey, from whence he gave advertisment to his mistres that within two days he wold come, with ij other his deare frends, to take Genivera awaye by stealthe; not forgetting also that he only (with a gentlewoman) were appointed to attend her into Byskaye, like as they were privie to every circumstance of their secret fleight. Which discourse of the boye, albeit moved show of inwarde alteration in Roderico, chiefly for the infidelity and treyson of th' inconstant Genivera, yet he dyssimuled so well his fretting anger that his passion was not discovered by the simple page; with whom he joyned in commendacion towching the resolucion of his mistres, whom he sayed was not voyde of reason to make her choice by the councell and consente of her fancie, seynge her mother used such slender diligence to bestowe her as she deserved. 'And albeit' (saith he) 'the gentleman be not riche nor of large possessions, yet thy mistres hath sufficient meanes to supplye both their wantes that waye; only she declareth a vertue in yeldyng so firme affection to his honest povertie.' All which, as he pronounced by an other tounge then the true interpretor of his hart, so, beyng alone, cryeng out of th' inconstancie of women, he seamed to put no difference betwene their wilfull blindnes and natural simplicitie of younge infantes; who, when they seame most wrabbed, their norsse offring theim the choice of an aple or figge, and a jewel of gret price, are rather appaised with the figge then once loke of the thyng of value; so some women, whether it be the mist of fonde love that blaires their eies, or the dome of a cursed desteny which God hath appointed to plage their malicius disposicion, seame often times so voide of raison, that, being presented with the choice of two offers far differing in value, thei are rather apt to imbrase the worste then redy to admit the best, which is most convenient for their honor and calling. He defaced the beauty of Genivera with the disloyaltye she used towardes her firste servante, condemnynge her judgement in refusing the frend-

Women compared to infants.

ship of a nobleman, famous by wealth and vertue, and the veray parragon of the wholle contrey, for the society of a pore companion, whose parentes beynge unknowen argued a doute of hys discente, and she altogether a straunger to hys dispocition. Wherin as he inveighed also indifferently against the partialitie of Fortune and blindnes of Love (who beyng wythoute eyes theym selves do likewise dym the understandinge of such as they kepe in miserable captivitie), so he sware in great rage to caste such a blocke in the waye of the two lovers that neyther the Biskayn sholde reape the frutes due to the travaile and service of his frende Diego, nor his cruell mistres forbeare any longer to sende a pleasante calme to the stormye tempest whiche kepes hyme now at anker amongest the perillous rockes of Pireneus.

For being enformed of this convenient meane to ease the distresse of his languishinge frende, who fedd only of the hope of his promise, he failed not to add an assured effect accordinglie. Albeit for his further instruction touching the sewer conveigh of the misterie, he went the seconde daye after to visit the mother of Genivera; wher he understode by the page that the stewarde was come with two other valyante gentlemen to assiste the enterprise, and that the nexte nighte, uppon the firste hower after midnighte, when the olde ladye and all her servantes, overwhelmed wyth the charme or mantel of dead slepe, were least apte to suspect conspiracies, they determyned to depart the castell with his mistres, who, for her parte, had furnished her wantes of all necessaryes touchinge the voyage.

This hastie resolucion required a spedie diligence in the knight, who, for hys parte also, used no lesse expedicion then was convenient; for, beynge come to hys house, he caused to arme ten or xij gentlemen of hys neyghbours and vassalls, to whom he communicated the some of hys intente. And the same night, some two or three howers affore the departure of the Biskayne and hys companye, marched in secret maner directly in the waye where they sholde passe, til they came to a grove, or coppyes of younge woode, regardinge the highe way on the one side and a mayne common or plaine on th' other syde; where, bestowinge him-

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selfe and his company in ambushe, he harde ymediatly the noyse of horsses and men approching with an unfortunate diligence. The lighte of the moone discovered the gentlewoman, whose bewtie seamed to contende with the brightnes of the same. Nexte unto whom ridd her miserable lover; whome, assone as Roderico parceived within the daunger of his carear, he felt a conversion of his auncient anger into a compassion of presente furye, whose force, sommonynge hym to an effect of morder, caused hym to cowche his speare in his reaste, directinge his angrie course so rightly towardes the pore Byskayne, that, in one momente, he pearsed hym thorowe the body, sendinge hym wythout other pasporte to the miserable crewe of those wretches, who, servinge under th' ensigne of folishe Love, do perish unhappely under the conduction of a blinde and naked boye; advising the reste of the Biskaines to eschew the like reward, oneles they attended a semblable hier to hym that had wrongfully encroched upon the grounde of an other. They seamed more willinge to accepte his offer then readie to revenge the death of their captaine; whom, seing the discoverie of the whole ambushe, they lefte on the grounde (takinge hys leave of his mistres with the laste breath of his life), and reaposed their chiefeste confidence in the swiftnes of their horses, without regarde who pursewed their hastie flight. Ymediatlye two of the company of Dom Roderico, disguised in unknowen armour, seased upon the sorowfull Genivera, who cold not use such patience in the death of her Biskaine lover, but her open cries, complayninge of the villenye of the morder, witnessed her inwarde sorowe of mynde. Wherin, according to her shortnes of her breath (laboring then in passion of extreme dollor), she exclaymed withoute respecte agaynste theym, crying to performe an execution of their crueltie upon her, aswel as they had discharged the office of unjuste tormentors of one who was of more price then they all. And so, torninge her to the dead bodie of her late frende, washed awaye the blod of his woundes with the teares of her eyes, not without great exclamacion agaynst the malice of her destenies in abridginge her exspectacion of longe joye wyth so short and tragicall an ende; forcing her

Roderico killeth the Biskaine.

Cupido.

to resigne the socitie of hym whom she loved no lesse then her selfe, to commit the honor of her virginitie to a praye to theves and villeynes. Wherwith, Roderico, without disclosinge his face or other parte of knowledge, tooke her by the hande with perswacion to dismisse these dollors seinge that her complaintes had no vertue to restore life to hym that was deade, and muche lesse to take vengance of the fact. But she, renewinge the remembrance of hym that laye dead of the ground by certeine streames of his blodd whyche she espied upon the gawntlet of Roderico, began to loase more pacience then affore, in such sorte, that the rudest of the companye, having for an increase of his terrible regarde a visarne, or false beard of blacke heare, curled like the Mauretyne, with a paire of counterfaite eyes of glasse, approched (by appointment) the trembling Genivera; to whose feare hee added an increase of terror in offringe the point of hys naked dagger to her white and delicate necke, threatninge, that if she contynued in these tearmes hys handes sholde performe the sacrafize of her life to the shadowe of the villayne whom she lamented so much, 'and who' (saith he) 'deserved rather to be broken in peces of the whele by the execucioners of tormentes then ende hys lyfe by the handes of a valyant knight.' Which mortall threates (as she thought) forcing her to an unwilling scilence, left her only th'assistance of her eyes to yelde compassion to her greffe; who set abroch so larglye the conduites of their watery humors that the passion of her harte appeared in th'abundance of her teares and broken sighes; whose force prevailed so much over her tender resistance that in th'ende her outwarde dule seamed inclosed and couched by force in the ynner corners of her heavy harte. In the meane while the reste of the companye had caryed the bodie of the deade Biskayne to a felden chapel, builded upon the high way side, where he sleapes in his fatal bed, covered with a testor of greene soddes. A notable example, sewer, proving the ordynarie successe of secret contractes and mariages made by stelth; where bothe the honor of the contractors loseth his vertue, and the commaundemente of God broken, enjoyninge us by speciall words to a dutiful humilitie and sincere

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obedience to our parentes; to whom the Law giveth authoritye to punishe us by deprivation and losse of th' inheritance whyche natural righte woulde give us if we dyd not rebell and abuse the lybertie which we enjoye by their goodnes. Wherin th' indiscret mothers, now a daies, deserve most ymputacion of blame, who, in giving place to the wilful inclynacion of their fonde youth, do accompte it no offence to suffer their doughters to comunicate matters of love with their howshode servantes; not remembringe th' infirmitie of such tender vessels, how proane men are by nature to do evil, and lastly how readie the evil spirite is to enter, fynding us unprovided, to th' ende that, falling into his danger, hee may triumphe in the ruyne of our soules purified thorowe the blod of our Savior. Which as I nede not go about to prove with new authorities, considringe I have noted sufficient touchinge both respects in divers places of this translacion, so wishing wel to al children, and amendment to such fond mothers as seame more careful to flatter the vaine appetit of their fraile ymps, then curius to give theim the rod of correction, which kepes theym alwaies within the view of vertue, it is time to resort to Dom Roderico and his trayne, who, travelling iij or foure dayes with hys captive Genivera (not knowing any of the company) arrived at last wythin half a dayes jorney of the hermitage of Diego, whom he gave warning of his comming by a foreryder of his company; who, also, for his part, as he had received such compforte in exspectacion of th' effect of the promisse of his frend that in the tyme of his absence he seamed to recover the best part of his auncient bewty; so the newes of th' aproch of his mistres breathed in him such doble passion of jeleose joy and doutfull feare, that, seaming uncertein wherin to resolve him selfe, durst skarcely admit a possibilitie in that wherof the message ymported absolute assurance, yelding notwithstanding speciall thankes to the director of the starres for thys laste favor showed upon his distresse in preferrynge hym to the sighte of her, who, beynge the cause of hys tormente, maye also put her laste hande to hys fatall execution. 'For wythe what greater joye or contentemente' (saythe hee) 'canne I visit the darke

shaddes and ghostes disburdned of this lyfe then to yelde up breath in the presence of her, whom, if I have honored in my life, it is nothing in respect of the service my soule hath vowed on her behalfe in the other world, in goinge affore to performe the office of her harbinger amonge the angels in paradise.' In the meane while Dom Roderico, who hetherto had not discovered himselfe to Genivera, was disarmed and with open face accosteth her as she rydes, debating with her in this sorte:— DISCOURSE XIII

'I dowt not at all but you finde it very straunge to see me in this place in such attyre, and upon an occasion so contrary to the rancke and honor I professe, and the rather by th' experience of the present injury you thinke you have received by me, who hetherto have borne the face of an affectioned frende to all your house. And, me thinke, I see how you dispose your selfe to accuse th' injustice of my cause in forcinge you to exchaunge the companie of your deare frende, to commit you to the societie of these deserte confines. Wherein also, as I have nothing to defend me from ymputacion of just blame on your behalfe but the vertue of that true frendship which knittes together with an indissoluble unitie the hartes of men; so, for your part, if you will rightly measure my honest meaninge in this enterprise, and removing the vaile of pertiall disdayne disgest the angrie beginning with ymagynacion of a pleasante ende, I dare abide the sentence of your indifferent judgement whether I be wholly worthie of reprehencion or you altogether voyde of falte. Roderico to Genivera.

'I besech you, also, consider that the true and loyal servante, indevoringe hym selfe to performe to th' uttermoste the will of hym that hath power to commaunde hym, dothe not only deserve a chiefe place of favor with his lord, but also a consideracion according to the merit of his service. Whych I do not infer to solicit my thankes wyth you, whom I have rather offended then contented in exposing an effecte of honest zeale I owe to all verteus and chast ladyes; whereof, for your parte, you shall fynde me no nigardee on your behalfe in time and place of nede; desiering you (in dismissing al sinister conceites of unworthie grudge) to

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preferr no less modestie then oughte to accompanie a gentlewoman of your age and calling; seing that honor seameth beste contented with the place and subjecte where he remeineth, using curtesie, then in abusing their greatnes, to preferre malicious crueltye. And because we approche neare the place where I intende (God willing!) to presente you, cutting of now your suspence with an exposicion of my meanynge, you muste note that, that whiche is alreadye paste, with the residue yet to be performed, tendeth to no other ende then to releve the distresse of the most loyal lover that this daye hath his being under the circle of the mone. Yt is the noble and valyante knighte Dom Diego, the moste constante servante that ever bare name to be worthie to do service to any ladye—who for the respecte of your displeasure hath registred hymselfe amydd the hideus rockes of theis savage and solitarie valleys—it is to hym I leade you, protestinge to you by the heavens, that the miserie wherein I sawe hym plunged on all sides, not sixe wekes passed, touched me so neare, that, if the sacrifize of my life onelye woulde have discharged the price or raunson of his martirdom, you had bene free from this passion of perplexitie by my meanes, and I not partaker of theis angrie regardes which threaten the utter losse of your good will. Wherin, as it is only I that have committed the offence (if there be any falte at all) so, I beseche you, let me onlye endure the punishment; with requeste that you extende compassion upon the desolation of him, who, almoste wasted with pyninge miserie, reaposeth (for your sake) a felicitie in th' extremitie of his harde pennance.' If Genivera were halfe desperat afore for the death of her Biskaine lover, it is now she is readie to excede the lymittes of raison, frettinge with such inwarde spite against the simple recorde of the name of Diego, that her malicious rage, forcing a scilence for the time, drive her to a respit in forminge her aunswere. Albeit as the passion of impatience is neither so perillous, nor of such continuance, as other traunces, accidental or proper, so, unclosing her eyes, she fired theim upon Roderico, with no lesse furious regard then the tigress beholding the devouring of her whelps afore her face; and wringing her

handes, with her long and smale armes a crosse uppon her tender breste, she exclaymed against his discourtesie in this sorte:—

Genivera exclameth against Roderico.

'Ah! mordring traitor!' (saieth she), 'no more worthie of the honor of knightehodd, for that thou hast forfeited thy faith by a detestable traison, is it upon me thou oughtest to wreake such an effecte of thy malicious villanye, or hast thou dissembled thy grudge so longe with a showe of fliering favor (like the cockadrell) towardes all our house, to vomitt thy venim upon me who never deserved but wel at thy handes? Haste thou the face to intreate me for an other, seinge in my presence thou hast killed him whose blood I wil pursewe upon the and thine, so longe as I have one gaspe of breath to accuse thy villanie? What authoritye hast thou to inquire of my doinges or impesh my determination, or in what sorte am I bounde to yelde the accompte of any resolution of mine? Who hath made the arbitrator, or much lesse given the commission to debate upon th'articles of my mariage; onlesse thy malice will force me to love that desloyall villaine, for whom thou haste committed an acte of perpetuall infamie to thy name? Whereof, also, for my part I wil reserve such remembrance in the storehouse of my hart, that only death shal take awaie the desier to revenge the wrong thou hast done me. And, albeit, Fortune hath made me thy prisoner, with power to dispose of me at thy pleasure, yet have I one resistance to defeate the extremitie of thy force, which, also, I wil not faile to put in execution,—that is, that afore thy traiterous cliante Diego quenche his thurste with the precious jewste of my virginitie, theis handes are readie to give me a fatal pasport to visit (with bloodie ghoste) the loyaltie of him whom thou hast slain by traiterous conspiracie. Therfore, if I maye honestly requeste the whom I hate, or if there be exspectacion of favor in a mortal enemie, I besech the either performe the laste facte of thy crueltye upon me, or, according to thy dutie, dismisse me with my woman and page to go whether our fortune will guide us.' 'God forbid,' saieth Roderico, 'that, in doinge wrong to the hope of my frend, I becomme th'occasion of his untimely death and losse of

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you, wandring by the unknowen pathes of this wilde desertes.' And continuing stil his former earnest to move her to some pitie upon the poore penitencier, he seamed to gaine as much as if he had assailed to nomber the sand lying upon the brinke of the endles occean. Albeit, with the supplie of severall discourses, they arrived at last at the rich hospital of Dom Diego; who, for wante of curious conceites to welcome his cruel mistres, presented his loathsome parsonage overgrowen with haire, and, for a more showe of humilitie, fel prostrate afore her, embracinge her feete not without great effusion of teares, sayinge :—

Diego upon his knees craveth pytye.

'Alas! good madam! the only hope of my life and compforte of my carefull harte, how long shall I hange in the doubteful ballance of my presente death, or lyfe? What date, alas! have you appointed to give ende to my desperate sorowes, yf my pennance not sufficiente for th' offence I have committed? Yea! what tormente have you in store whiche I am not reddye to endure to yelde you contentement? Neither hadd I hadd breath at this present to put you in remembrance of my distresse, if I had not with holden my handes from fatal violation to witnes my loayltie on your behalf, and much lesse bene in case to preferre mine innocencie; yf the onely foode of secrett contemplation of your beautye hadd not distilled continuall norriture to the vitall partes of my consumed corps. And as you maye easelye ymagine what pleasure I founde in this longe and paineful absence, so I greve not in any thing that is past, nor refuce to abide any future punishment, yf only I maye receive at your handes the rewarde of my constancie, whiche I maye boldlye compare wyth the moste assured that ever was.' Genivera, swellynge with disdaine, and full of femenine rage, appearing in her sparklyng eyes and other partes of her face, dyd not only refuce to aunswere, but also forbarre to behold hym whom she hated. She barred him also the benefit of her face, in bestowing her lookes to the contrary side; which moved cause of doble sorowe to the poure afflicted lover, who, beynge yet uppon his knees, renewinge the force of his teares with the viewe of the tyrannye of his mistres, seamed to drawe, with much ado, a feble voyce from

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Dom Diego, being stil prostrate, crieth for compassion to his mistrys.

the veray bottom of his stomacke, and restored the tearmes of his former complainte in this sorte:—'Seyng neyther the sincerity of my faithe, approved with so long and loyall service, nor the view of my present misery, wherof I have made a painefull experience without intermission thies xxij monethes, bee of force to perswade a creditt in my constancie; seynge also my dolefull teares, derived of the injustice of your disdaine, are denied to worke effectes of juste pitie in you, and lastelye, seynge without the consente of your goodwill I fynde an ympossibilitie to live, I beseche you, and by the vertue and courtesie whyche oughte to appere in you, I conjure you, as the laste requeste wherewith your unfortunat servant will troble you in this worlde, to mortefie with your owne handes the remembrance of that offence, whych you ymagyn I have done agaynst you, with th'execution of presente deathe. Refuce not (Oh cruell mistres!) to do vengaunce uppon hym who is wearye of his life, and receive at laste this willinge offer ymportyng two singler commodities, the one a pleasure to me to buye thy contentement with the price of my blod, the other an absolute quiet to thy self in being satisfied with his death whose lif thou abhorrest. Wherin, certeinly, for my part, I am to accompt the hower most happie, which, closyng up my mortall eyes, doth sounde also the fatall retraict of my longe sorowes. But the chiefest felicity I accompt in this last acte of my life is, that, in being so willinge to dye by the stroake of thy hande, I shall leave the to ymagin how ready I was to honor the with the unfained service of my life, the world to give iudgement of my loyalty, and the gods to take vengaunce of thy crueltie. Yf there be reason in my requeste, why defarre you th'execution, or yf I have failled in my demande, why staye you to aunswere? It is nowe (alas!) that I meete the full of my mishapp, beinge denied both death and life by her to whom, of al the worlde, I have most desiered to make declaration of obedience in any sorte what so ever. Alas! why staye you to ridd me from tormente, and your selfe out of care to behold any more this desolat knighte, who (denied to participat other favor) accomptes it a laste felicitie to give up the ghoste in your

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presence?' Wherewith, fyndinge no remorce of stubborne disdaine in his mistres, who in all this time wold not give him the favor of a simple looke of the eye, and much lesse dispose her selfe to aunswere in any sorte to his complaintes, felte suche warr betwene the force of his passion and debilitye of his sences, beinge voyde of natural strength, that, in kissing her foote, he fell into a deadly sowne, pronouncyng only theis wordes with the departure of his breath:—'Ah! feble rewarde of unfayned loyaltye!'

Roderico, amased no lesse with the tragicall farewell of his frende, then moved with juste anger againste the unseemely tyranny of Genivera, commaunded certeine of his companie to restore the traunce of Diego, and with the reste addressed hym to the mercilesse gentlewoman, whome he threatned in this sorte:—'If the contynuance of thy crueltye force me to chaunge affection, assure thy selfe (detestable woman, and enemye to the vertue of all your secte!) thou shalte not escape without the hier of the wronge wherewith thou abuseste the honor whiche is offred the. Makes thou suche conscience to yelde compassion, or admitt the honeste service of so noble a gentleman as this, presented with suche humilitie, that earste (without regarde of honestie or vertue) committed thy selfe and honor (as a fugitive) to the governement of a ronagate straunger? What crueltye can be greater, or by what reason canst thou challenge other amendes or consideration of the wronge thou hast unjustly conceived, then an humble prostitution, with so many teares in token of repentance? And for thy parte, what canste thou desyere more of this gentleman, then, in forgiving the falte of thy false contracte, with thy last minion, not only to forbeare to enter into suspicion touching thy unsemely ronnyng awaye with an unknowen villeine, but also, craving the guerdon of his constancie, is at point to sacrafice his life to appaise thy anger and yeld the contentment? For end, I advise you to chaunge opinion, least I committ to as many morsels thy desloial body, as this wofull knight, not long since, made bloddie devision of his unhappie hawke, the only cause of his present distresse, and, by your owne folly, ready to give you a title of the most

Roderico threatneth Genivera.

tyrannouse and arrogant gentlewoman that is; neither have I begon this enterprise to leave it unperfecte, or give it over, with this successe. Wherfore, seynge you take pleasure in extremities, I will fede your delite with the offer of love or death. Wherof, as I give you the benefitt of the choice, so I sweare unto you, by hym that is not ignorante of my intente, that, if you refuce the first, you shall not faile in thys place to passe under the sentence of the last: wherin my selfe will not feare to discharge th'office of the fatall minister, in embruyng my handes in the blodd of her whose follie only causeth the death of one of my dearest frendes.' DISCOURSE XIII

Thies threates dismayed nothing the malicious Genivera, nor abated any parte of her presumptuouse arrogancie; for who had sene the fyerie regardes of her eyes, the knittynge of her browes, whettyng of her teethe, closinge her delicate fingars, withe other braveries, excedynge farre the simplicitie of suche tender yeres, unexperienced as yett in th'assaltes and malice of an adverse fortune, wolde have sayed shee hadd rather procured terrour to Roderico, then given place to his fearefull offer or somounce of love or death, defyenge also the rigour of his authoritie with thies tearmes:—'Lyke as, thowe kaitife knighte!' sayeth she, 'he that is once thorough bathed in the suddes of ynnocente blodde, is so fleshed and hardened in villanie that no acte of detestation seames any synne to hym; so it is no merveile if thowe, whyche haste committed unnaturall slaughter of one whose true vertue exceded the flatterynge fame of thy renowme, and gave no place to the integretie of life, arte not without feare to committ me to the same guide, leaste, in sufferynge me to live, thou couldest not avoyde the justice whyche I am to procure upon the injury I have received. Besides, I am here readie to laye my heade uppon the blocke of execution, rather then to give the honour of my virginitie to any; seinge the cursed handes have deprived me of hym to whome bothe the tree and frute dyd only apperteine. Neyther do I tremble in the remembrance of the stroke of deathe, howe cruell soever it appere, for that I shall the rather stande affore the troane from whence is graunted all vengaunce to suche wretches as thou arte. Ha God! seing

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thou arte righteouse, why doste thou not thonder justice upon the wronge which thies outlawes have don thy ynnocente hande-mayde? Ah traitor Roderico! perswade thy selfe that thou canste not offer me so cruell a deathe as I am moste readye to endure the tormente, hopynge the same shall serve hereafter as the only cause and meane of th'indifferent destruction of thy selfe and hym for whom thou travellest thus in vaine.' Here her woman and page began to perswade her to pitie on the behalfe of the knighte that suffred suche passion for her sake, with consente to the honeste requestes of Roderico, solicitynge her so frankelye towchinge th'extremities of theym both, that she entred into tearmes of reprehencion againste their honeste meanynge. 'Will you' (saieth she) 'be eyther enchaunted with the fayned teares of this deloyall who passioneth hym selfe uppon creditt, or stande in awe of the tyrannouse threates of thys morderor, whose villanie, wyth covered face, hathe taken awaye the lyfe of youre mayster? Ah! unhappye girle that I am, it is nowe, alas! that I feele the heavie handes of Fortune; whose malyce hathe not onelye putte me beetwene the handes of hym whome I hate no lesse then I have already experienced his dyssembled love, but also, in doublyng my mishap, assaileth me with the sinister perswacions of my servants and companions of care, who ought rather to allowe my resolucion in death then prefer motion in any sort touchinge my consente to requests of no less corruption then theim selves be infected who solicite in so bad a case. Ah! Love, I prove to late, alas! th'infydelytie of thy promise, fyndinge so bad a recompense for so dutifull obedience to yelde at thy sommonce, and so slender defence for suche as commit theim selves faythfullye to the governmente of thy lore. Why sholde nature be more curius to frame us of a more delicate molde, tempered with a mettel of fragilitie, then careful to leave us armour of resistance agaynste th'assaltes of fortune? For if I had not had a perle of flattering affection, painted in my face, I had not tasted the beginning of a pleasure, whose dollorous farewell-for-ever brings more cause of greeff, then th'apprehencion at the first engendred parfecte contentment: for beinge, alas! uppon the point to sipp of the

sugred cup, wyth expectacion to feede of the frute of my pleasant attainte, lo! how traiterus love serveth me with dishes of mortal annoye, and in place of the deynties which others finde in the ende of their longe hope, it is I that am presented with the banquet of al bitter confections, which makes me heare resigne, and declare my fatal testament uppon, th'inconstancye of that pleasante follye: whom, as I leave at libertie to make hys gaine of others as well as he hath dallied with me, so I rejoyce in th'exchaunge of so great an evil for so present a consolacion as deathe; in whom I hope to fynd no lesse contentment and quiet, then the other hath assailed me with diversatie of passion. Retire, oh! cursed mishap, to th'ende that, dyenge by thy meanes, I may live without the in th'other worlde; where, in place of a thousand annoyes, which (yf I shold consente to longer life) thou hast yet to thonder upon me, I shalbe sewer of eternall reapose, norrished with th'invisible foode whych God ympartes to hys angels and soules assistinge his heavenly paradise. Come deathe, and do thyne office upon thys wretched girle, who attendes the sharpnes of thy darte, to prevente the pearcinge arrowes of myne adversarye! Ah! poore harte devoyde of hope, and desperate touching the consommacion of thy desyers, ceasse hensfurth to wishe the fruytion of longer tearme, seinge destenie, love, and lyf, are determined to dysmisse me here hence to sewe for peace elswhere, and embrase the ghost of hym whose lif was sacrafized to the deloyaltie of thys wretche; who also, for his parte, not satisfyed with the blod of ynnocencye, takes no compassion upon my teares, which I wishe to distyll by suche abundance, that, in overflowing the vital partes in me, he might see me perishe in his presence, drowned wyth th'inundacion of undeserved sorow proceding by his wickednes.' Wherewith her eyes performed her desier with such plentie of teares that there was not one of the companie voyed of compassion on the behalfe of the dollor whych tormented her, not ceassing notwithstanding to perswade her to pitie towarde that poore Diego; who, beynge newely recovered by the diligence of th'assistance, sprinkling fresh water of the fountayne upon his face, dyd no soner lift up

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his sorowfull lyddes, beholdinge the lamentable passion of hys mistres, with certeine likelehodes he espied showing an encrease of her disdayne towardes hym, but he retired to his former debilitie, fallinge downe dead betwene the armes of suche as suported hym; and, albeit he was eftsones restored, yet the force of hys passion assailed hym stil wyth three or foure mortal panges, one in the necke of an other, in such sorte, as the whole company gave judgement of hys death: amongest the whych Roderico was not the leaste amased, who, greving indifferently with th' obstinate crueltie of Genivera and present perill of hys deare frend Diego, was in long debate what pollecie to use to qualifie the one and prevente the daunger of the other. He perswaded that if he killed the willful Genivera, he shold also give ende to the dayes of Diego; for that, upon the viewe and remembrance of the one, depended the life of the other; and so, in doinge no good to any, he sholde commit doble offence to God and the world, both in spottinge his soule with uncivill morder, and also to become the author of his death in whose lyfe he reaposed his most worldly felycitie. On th' other side, the untowardnes of the girle argued her intractable in suche sorte as hee desiered, which confirmed the continuall martirdom of hys frende; whose distresse, as it moved hym to suche inwarde remorce that to procure his deliverye he made no conscience to lighte a candle afore the devill, so he gave a newe charge uppon the good will of Genivera with gentle perswacions, lainge afore her what vertue ought to appere in suche tender and delicate yeres, and how greatly the vice of ingratitude defaced the renowme of a gentlewoman assisted wyth crueltie without reason. Wherein, gaininge no lesse then if he had never put the devise in execution, he retired to th' extremitie of his former threates and last pollecie, swearinge that she shoulde fynde no difference betwene the sommonce and effecte, seing that by her death he shoulde give ende to her disdayne and desolate state of hys frende, whom, as he doubted not, woulde deserne in tyme what commoditie it were to purge the ayre of such contagiouse filthes of ingratefull arrogancie, so he was also of opynion that tyme wold yelde commenda-

cion to his fact, chiefly for that, in preservinge the honour of a familie, he thought it more expediente to exterminat the two principall offenders, then to reserve the lyfe of eyther of them for an utter extinction of the glorie of the whole house. Wherefore, regarding the rest of his traine, hee commanded to laye handes of the obstinate gentlewoman, with her two companions, with charge to use no lesse mercy in their severall executions then the chiefeste of the three extended pitie to the amarus knighte, whyche he thoughte wold yelde up the ghost afore her.

The ladye, hearinge the sentence diffinitive of her life, escryed the morder with open mouthe, as yf she had exspected some succour to defende her from deathe. Wherein her hope was frustrate, for the deserte fostred no other companye but suche as were readye in the place to commit execution. The page and poore chambriere helde upp their handes for mercie to Roderico, who, fainyng an ympedimente in hys hearyng, made a signe to his men to put effecte to his commandement. Genivera, entreating for the lives of her page and woman, desiered that their ynnocentie mighte not do pennance for the offence whych she had don, cravyng with great humilitie that the punishement myght be performed uppon her, 'from whom the falte—if it be a matter meritorious of blame,' sayeth she, 'for a woman to kepe her fayth to her husbande—is derived, and yeld justice to thies unfortunat wretches, least th'execution of their ynnocentie increase your detestable offence. Oh!' saieth she, with her handes and eyes beholdyng the heavens, 'thou my most deare and lawfull husbande, whose soule I see walkyng in the middest of the loyall lovers, what better proffe canste thou have of the sinceritie of my love then to see me laye my body uppon th'alter of ymmolation to untymely death for thy sake? Neyther shalte thou for thy parte, oh! boocher and mortall morderour of my carkasse, to whose crueltie my destenie hathe consented in quenching thy thurste with the blodd of a pure mayde, glorifie hereafter to have forced the harte of a simple gentlewoman, and muche lesse made a breache into her honor, eyther by terrible threates or sugred perswations.' Upon which laste wordes, notwithstandyng,

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attended such argumentes of terrour that a man wolde have thoughte that the veraye remembrance of death hadd somewhat quallified her vehemency and mortified the greatest part of her former furies. Dom Diego by this tyme came to hym selfe, and seynge the discourse of the tragedye readye to presente hys laste acte, with the death of his faire mistres Genivera *la blonde*, was driven to force hym selfe to speake for the lyfe of her whose crueltie hadde committed hym allmoste to the panges of extreme daunger. Wherefore, staynge the diligence of suche as had the charge of execution, he addressed hym to Roderico with this requeste:—

Genivera beginneth to showe arguments of compassion.

Diego seweth for the lyf of Genivera.

'My lorde and greate frende, the present experience of your rare frendshipp hath made so lyberall a prooff of youre undowted meanyng towardes me, that if I sholde live the age of a whole worlde I shoulde not be hable to discharge the bondes of your desert; so, considering the cause of this misfortune precedes only of the malice of mine owne destenie, and that it is a vanitie to contende with the thynges which the heavens have determined upon us, I beseche you, by the vertue of your honor and for a confirmation of all the good tornes you have done me, to graunte me yet one requeste, whiche is, that, in pardonning the life of this gentlewoman and her companie, you will retourne theim to the place from whence you broughte theim, with no lesse assuraunce and saffetie then yf you guided your miserable Dom Diego. For my parte, being fullie resolved not to kepe warre with my destenies, I am perswaded to a contement touchinge my lot, assurynge you, for the reste, that the sorowe whiche I see she suffreth giveth me more cause of passion, then the greef which I endure by her meanes troubleth me. Let her live in peace, and me in exspectation to receive ende of my tormentes by the devouring knif, which is ordeyned to cut in sonder the fillet whereuppon dependes the fatall course of my cursed yeres. Till whiche tyme, I have sworne to kepe residence in theis solitarye desertes, aswell to endure the pennance of myne owne indiscretion, as also to continue in secrett prayer to th'almightye for the continual quiet of her who may boldly vaunte to be the mistres of the most loyall servante that ever mente honor or service to ladie.'

Who doubtes in the merveilous forces of love, let him be absolved with this example; seing that as the impression which we cal love hath power to bringe to an unitie the mindes that lived in seperation, make indissoluble peace with the quarells which seame immortall, quallifying the rigour of those hartes whiche, without this passion, no other pollicie could appaise, so, when he discovereth the full perfection of his effectes, he preferres suche a facilitie in thinges whiche earste seamed impossible, that, by his onely meane, they become neither daungerous to pursewe nor harde to obtaine: whych appered rightly in this younge lady; in whom, as the sinister conceite of a former jelowsie, her affected zeale contracted to an other, with her just cause of anger for his death, had engendred a disdayne to Dom Diego, an extreme desier to revenge her wronge upon Dom Roderico, and, by the same meane, to ende her owne lyfe, so love, removinge the vaile that blinded the eyes of her understandinge, and breakinge th'adamante rocke planted in the middeste of her stomake, brought her in one instante to beholde with open eyes the constancy, patience, and perseverance of her first and moste loyall servant; whose last prayer and intercession on her behalf stirred up in her more remorce then al the services of court or pennance in the painfull wildernes ever hable to prefer: whereof she exposed a present effect in castinge her armes about the necke of the desperat knyght, to whom she forbare no sortes of kisses nor amarus embrasinges, seamynge no lesse passioned wyth joye and love on hys behalfe then earste she seamed plunged in dispair and sorowe, ballancing indifferently betwene life and death in his presence. Neyther was she hable to pronownce any worde upon the soddayne, tyll (beyng restored to the use of her tongue) by the discontynuance of her traunce, she excused her former rigour wyth tearmes of humylitie, and, desyeringe pardon of the follies wherwyth she had abused hys patience, offred her selfe hereafter to be the slave and servant of hys shadow, takyng th'assistance of th'ymperfections in love to be in some sort contrybutarye to her falte. 'For that' (sayth she) 'as love hathe this vice of nature, that such as accompte theym selves to see moste

Her hart.

Genivera excuseth her former falte and follie, with promise of unfayned fayth to Diego.

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cleare are they whych most often commit greatest faltes by ignorance; so, besydes the confession of the wronge I have don you so many wayes, lo! I am ready to abide the punishment of your owne judgement, without craving any dispence of justice or moderacion of pennance for my respecte of favor. And, albeit, (for my parte) I have not escaped wythout passion, but that the stormes of adversatie, which you have seene me endure, have driven me to th' uttermost of my patience, yet I accompt my selfe happie to have passed that awaye, for th' experience I have made of two effects of verteous extremities; the one of constant loyaltie in you, whych only hath right to chaleng the crowne of glory from hym that sacrafized himself upon the blodie body of hys ladye, (who in dyenge so gave ende to his annoyes, where you have chosen a kynde of languishynge life of more harde tolleracion a thousand tymes then the sharp arrowes of death), the other consistes in the clemencie wherwyth you have mortefied so well the rage of your adversaries that I, whych earst hated you to death, am now so vanquished by your courtesye, that I accompte myne honor and lyfe of to small value to requite your merit. Wherin also I acknowledge a debte to Seigneur Roderico, whose wisedome makes me ashamed of my follie in resisting his rightfull demaunde touching the releeffe of your undeserved distresse.' Wherunto as he wold have replied wyth semblable humylitie, Dom Roderico prevented his meanynge in embrasinge theym both, with peculiar commendacion to theyr vertues, and speciall thankes to the goodnes of their fortune, for that without peril of honor they had passed that dangerus passage; advising them to retorne with hym to hys castel, from whence hee sayde he wolde gyve warning to their mothers, to whom he also undertoke to cooler th' accidente wyth some other circumstance of fayned substance. Wher upon, they mounted on horsbacke, leaving the stately hospitall to the nexte hermyt; and using easye jorneys, they toke awaye the tediousnes of the way with the pleasant devises whych passed betwen the two lovers, embrasing one an other in honest sort, as a simple recompense of their longe and weary annoyes, till tyme, with the consent of the

churche, gave authoritie to consommat the rest of their desiers. From the house of Roderico was advertisement given to the two ladye mothers (in equall care for the loss of their children) excusing the secret departure of Genivera in that she went to see Dom Diego, lyinge sicke in a castell of hys frende Seigneur Roderico; where, if it pleased theym to give their consente, the mariage sholde be performed. Wherin there nedes no pithie solycitors to neither of the widowes, for that, for the more honor of the feaste and contentmente in the allyance, they failed not there in parson at the day appointed; where the mariage was performed with pompp, accordyng to the magnificence of both their houses. And so it is to be thought that the stormes and tormentes past, endured by theim both, yelded thys conclucion of other tast then they whych (wythout painful travaile in the presence of love) possesse, the fyrste daye, the full of their desiers: whose pleasures, certeinly, as they resemble the condicion of hym, who, norrished al the dayes of hys lyf in deintie fare, cannot judge so well of delite as he that some times findes wante of suche delicatie; soo also an extreme thruste makes us fynde the wyne more pleasant, and a long fasting gives a better taste to oure meate. Neyther is love wythout annoye any other thynge then a cause without an effect; for he that wyll take awaye the paynfull traveills and longe sute, robbes the lover of the prayse of hys constancie, and dothe wronge to the glory of hys pursewt; seyng that he only is worthy to weare the crowne of tryumphe, who, encountringe all conflictes, doth reapose more assurance in the vertue of hys constancie then feare (in any sorte) the malice of any fortune. Let thys be then the mirrour of loyal lovers, in detestacion of th'impudicitie of suche whych feare not to give a charge wher they fynde good countenance, and readye retire at the first repulse; ympartinge also a participacion of worthy rebuke to th'others, who, to contente the humor of their fonde affection, doo accompte it a vertue to exchaunge their former generositie wythe a gloriouse title to be reputed as true and faythfull champions of love; for that the perfection to love truellie, consistes not in passion or pyning

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cares, and much lesse cometh he to the ful of his desier by sighs, dollorus regardes, or lamentable exclamacions, accordinge to the Spanyard, nor solemne vowes to visitt far places for her sake, or childishe teares, as the amarus Italyan—to whom also we may ad this Barcelonian, Diego, who thought, thorowe his desperat pennance in the desertes of Pireneus, to reclayme the goodwill of his mystres—seing that, as in al our affayres, we ought not excede the institucion of vertue, so she chiefly is to beare a swaighe in the knot of this indissoluble amytie. Besides, we se heare that the diligence of a perfect frende is of more force in those cases then all the passions, panges, letters of pithie perswacion, or other ymportunyties whatsoever, tollerated in matters of love: neither can a man judge what a treasor it is to have an assured frende, tyll eyther the want of suche a jewell, or experience of his frendshipp, make hym tast the benefit of so great and rare a gift; seyng that a true frende, beinge the second part or one moyetie of our selves, is alwayes so guided by a natural *sympathya* of affection towardes hym whom he loveth, that he rejoyseth in the pleasure and commodytie of hys frende, and is readye to participat with hys adversaty when fortune is disposed to plaie any part of her accustomed mobilitie. Whereof, albeit, we fynde not, at thys daye, so many thorowly perfect in that vertue, as the whole worlde, on all partes, swarmes withe infynitye of the contrarye faction, whych the Grecian philosopher calleth *Microphilos*—That is a demye, or halfe frende, accordinge to th' Inglishe phrase.

The conclucion of the translator upon his volume of tragicall discourses.

Yet am I moved, by diverse occasions, to passe over suche discourse, contentinge my selfe that the diversatye of my histories gyve recreacion to the reader, wythout stayinge to infer authorities whych may touche or sift the conscience of any. And, observing chiefly, as nere as I colde, an order of truth, my seconde respecte was to prefer such examples as myghte best serve to instruct our youthe, who as they maye see heare the faltes of fragilitie punished with shame, losse of honor, cruell deathe, and perpetuall infamie to their posteritie; so have they also, of the contrarye, speciall patternes of vertue, alluringe theym to ymytacion of sem-

blable honestye, wyth diversitie of authorities provinge the reward of vertue and vertuouse lyvinge. Whereof lett all degrees make their proffit as they thinke good; accordinge to the flee in the milke, fedinge of the good and vertuous frute, and leave the reste, as poison and bitter dregges, to such as are wholly drowned in the desiers of the fleshe and buryed in a pitt of worldly filthe. And as I have seamed in some places to enterlarde this profane translation with certeyne testimonies oute of sacred recordes, so I hope the same will the rather defende th' integrity of myne intente againste all objections; consideringe that the most parte of the simple and ignoraunte sorte are rather moved with suche examples then reduced with the severe sentences of somme great philosopher or reformed theologyan. Besydes in theis discourses of love, th' adulteror is putt in remembrance of his faulte, the morderer seeth the rewarde of his iniquitie, he that yeldes to the sommonce of fowle concupiscence is sewer to be touched with the marke of infamie, and suche as passioneth him selfe upon creadit may beholde heare the meede of his follye: wherein, for my parte, as I greve that the worlde (at this presente) swarmeth with so greate a nomber of insensed men readye to dye for a pleasure of so small momente as the contentemente of the bodie, so I wishe that as in writynge thies tragicall affaires I have founde the falte of mine owne life, that also the reste of the younglinges of our countrey in reding my indevor, maye breake the slepe of their longe follye, and retire at laste to amendement of lyfe; leaste, in remeyninge still in the laborinth of sensuallitie, they serve not hereafter as a fable and stage playe to the posteritie of a multitude. For ende I exspecte no other hier of my traveile, then that my diligence maye seame thankefull to her to whose honor and goodnesse I owe no lesse then all that I have.

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